



*"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"*

## MONTHLY MEETING

7.30 pm, Thursday 31 May 2012  
at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls

**Guest speaker: Dr Philip Pells**  
***The Vanishing Thirlmere Lakes***

Less than an hour's drive out of Helensburgh are the World Heritage listed Thirlmere Lakes. These ancient lakes on Sydney's southern door-step are well known for their wildlife, bushwalking, swimming, canoeing and bass fishing. Well that's not quite correct; they used to be well known for these things. Visit there now and you'll find something is amiss. Mysteriously, the once stunning lakes have all but disappeared.

Unusually, the five connected lakes are not supplied with water by rivers or streams but instead have for 15 million years relied on underground aquifers and rain. The lakes have dried out in droughts past, but then quickly refilled when rain returned. Not so this time. Following nine years of drought, the heavy rains of the double La Nina of the past eighteen months have failed to restore the ancient lakes. Nonetheless early last year the then Labor government released a report concluding that the near decade-long drought was responsible for the drying of the lakes. Given the heavy rain following the drought, this explanation falls short of being convincing. Brian Marshall, a former professor of structural and engineering geology, has instead suggested "a strong possibility" that longwall mining in the area by Xstrata Coal has drained the water of the lakes. Xstrata refutes the suggestion.

The mystery of the lakes prompted a study by consulting geotechnical engineer and groundwater expert Dr Philip Pells. The eighteen month study is impressively comprehensive. In addition to an extensive compilation of rainfall, lake and water well and some mine records, the investigators have interviewed residents and collected aerial photographs going back to the Second



World War. Complementing this impressive body of information, the team has undertaken computational modelling of the ground water system. The conclusions reached are sobering and, if correct, have disturbing implications for coal mining and coal seam gas extraction.

Dr Philip Pells is a civil engineer who has specialised in geotechnical matters. He was part of the design and construction teams for the Sydney Harbour Tunnel, the Sydney Opera House Car Park the Eastern Distributor and for major mine infrastructure in Kalimantan and Chile. In recent years his work has been dominated by studies in relation to underground coal mining and, now, Coal Seam Gas. He has a great interest in the Blue Mountains and the history of engineering, interests which combined in him and Philip Hammon producing a book, *The Burning Mists of Time*, dealing with the history of oil shale mining in the Blue Mountains with particular emphasis on the Katoomba area.

Philip is a Doctor of Science, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, and a Fellow of Engineers Australia.

**STOP** the Coalpac Consolidation Project proposal and help protect an iconic natural area of NSW.

**WRITE A SUBMISSION** objecting to the **Coalpac Consolidation Project proposal**:

- ❖ Use the **SUBMISSION WRITING GUIDE** which is enclosed with this newsletter, or
  - ❖ Come to a submission writing workshop.
- See page 3 of this newsletter for details.

### BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

**Lawson Nursery** –Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9am to noon until 30 May, then closed for winter. The nursery is located in the Lawson Industrial Area on the corner of Park and Cascade Streets, opposite Federation Building Materials (see the map on [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)).

**Magpie Market**, Sunday 20th May at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm. (This will be our last market stall for the season. Sales at Blackheath Community Market and the Magpie Market will resume in August).

Tube stock \$2.50 each.

Enquiries: Kevin Bell 4787 6436, [kevinbell@eftel.net.au](mailto:kevinbell@eftel.net.au)

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT  
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21 MAY 2012**

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## MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

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## Nursery News

Market sales: These have been exceptional this month with a profit of \$515 from the Blackheath Community Market and \$499.50 from the Lawson Magpie Market. The Blackheath figure was greatly boosted by a generous donation of eight advanced rock-orchids by David Coleby which sold like, well, normally one would say "hot cakes" but why not "beautiful, quality plants"?

May will be our last appearance at these Markets until we re-emerge after winter in August. We will also be closing our Lawson nursery for sales after Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May and will similarly resume in August. Autumn is a good time for planting so hurry in soon to our Lawson nursery (Wednesday and Saturday mornings) or catch us at the markets. We have sown numerous seeds which on the heated beds and under the misting system in our glass-house will germinate and grow through winter and be ready for potting by our volunteers in Spring.

**Plant of the Month:** We are departing this time from previous plants which owe part of their name to a person to one relying on its own characteristics. This is *Conospermum taxifolium* (Greek *conos*, a cone, *sperma*, a seed referring to the shape of the nut and leaves similar to those of the genus *Taxus*, the Yew).

*Conospermum* is an endemic genus of about 50 species, most of which are in the south-west of Western Australia but are also distributed throughout temperate regions of the eastern states. The common name of "Smokebush" for the genus derives from the profuse heads of mostly white flowers which, when viewed from afar, resemble puffs of smoke rising from the ground.

Blackheath volunteer, Sue Nicol, collected seeds of *C. taxifolium* (called the "variable smokebush", referring to different leaf forms and considered by some botanists to be different species but forms tend to intergrade) and successfully germinated these at our nursery, potted them on and we expect to have plants available for sale in Spring.

It is an erect small (0.5-1m x 1-2m) shrub with flat, variable leaves and prefers well-drained soils with partial sun but will tolerate dappled shade or full sun. The white, tubular flowers are borne in dense clusters in Spring to early Summer. It is frost tolerant and seems to resist diseases. It would make an interesting and attractive addition to any garden.

**Kevin Bell, Nursery Manager.** (4787 6436, [kevinbell@eftel.net.au](mailto:kevinbell@eftel.net.au))



Photo:  
***Conospermum  
taxifolium***  
by Jill Dark at  
[anpsa.org.au](http://anpsa.org.au)

## The Gardens of Stone Visitors Map

\$7.50 plus \$1.50 postage. Buy the map online ([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)), write to BMCS, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782 with your cheque or money order, or ask for a copy at our monthly meeting.

**BUSHCARE GROUP:** The Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group meets on the second Saturday of each month, 9am till noon. Tools and gloves are available. Bring a drink, a snack and a hat. New members are always welcome.

Phone Karen on 4757 1929.

## SIMPLE ACTIONS TO HELP PROTECT AN ICONIC AREA of NSW



We wrote in April's edition of Hut News about the Gardens of Stone, which skirts the western edge of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. An open-cut mine proposal, the Coalpac Consolidation Project, threatens to rip up a part of this pristine area which is dotted with internationally significant, 'platy' pagodas and an abundance of native plants and animals.

You can help toward getting 40,000 hectares of this pristine landscape protected within the conservation reserve system:

### ☺ WRITE a simple submission

objecting to the Coalpac Consolidation Project proposal by 1st June 2012.

Using the SUBMISSION WRITING GUIDE within will show you exactly how to do that. Pick out a few dot points, make them your own, and send your submission in by 1st June 2012.

You will be helping greatly toward protecting one of the top seven iconic natural areas of NSW from destruction.

If you'd like further help with your submission writing, we're holding a series of submission writing workshops to make it super easy! These have already been held in Lithgow and Bathurst during April and those that attended found them very helpful.

### ☺ BE GUIDED through writing a submission

**Wentworth Falls** - 5:30 to 7pm

**Monday 7th May 2012**

The Conservation Hut,  
Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls.

**Springwood** - 5:30 to 7pm

**Tuesday 8th May 2012**

Lower Hall, Springwood Civic Centre  
106-108 Macquarie Road, Springwood

**Sydney** - 6 to 7:30pm

**Monday 14th May 2012**

Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Level 2 / 5 Wilson Street, Newtown

### ☺ It's important we get as many individual submissions written as possible.

### ***What's the latest News on this campaign?***

There have been many activities within the campaign to stop the destructive open-cut mining proposal from destroying part of the Gardens of Stone and surrounding the town of Cullen Bullen, NSW.

- The Department of Planning & Infrastructure placed the environmental assessment of the Coalpac Consolidation Project proposal on exhibition announcing that comments from the public can be received up until the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012.
- On April 19<sup>th</sup>, Justin McKee talked to Cullen Bullen residents about how to lodge a submission

with the NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure to formally object to the proposal. The workshop was attended by over 70 people!

- Lithgow City Council had announced in August 2011 that it would hold a public meeting about the Coalpac Consolidation Project in Cullen Bullen, NSW.

The Mayor Neville Council then back-flipped on this promise and announced a private meeting would be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012. Residents felt this was unfair considering there were many interest groups campaigning on this issue. After much pressure from the public and other Councillors, the meeting was opened to the public once again.

Residents heard from Coalpac representatives on the latest information about its project. Residents voiced their mistrust for the company due to a host of ongoing problems they are faced with from Coalpac's current operations such as health issues, damage to property the company will not repair, intrusive sounds levels, mud on the roads and a dusty environment.

Lithgow City Council was presented with a copy of a petition created by local residents in January 2012 evidencing the majority objected to the proposal entirely.

Justin McKee from the Blue Mountains Conservation Society made a statement to the press that locals deserve to have answers before the public exhibition period for the project proposal ends in June.

- On the main road of Cullen Bullen, Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April, Cullen Bullen residents gathered as they watched the ABC TV helicopter fly off after filming a story featuring them handing a petition to local Member for Bathurst, Paul Toole. The petition showing the majority of residents did not support the proposal.

Residents stated they objected to a host of components and wanted the mining in the area to remain underground and for a significant buffer zone to be placed around their town and its school to protect it into the future.

As well as ABC TV, ABC Radio Sydney, local Prime TV Orange, ABC Radio Central West, local WIN TV Orange and the Lithgow Mercury also covered the story of this mining town wishing to preserve its culture, lifestyle and surrounding natural environment from destructive open-cut mining.

JOIN Blue Mountains Conservation Society,  
or renew your membership online.  
[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

**The Ben Bullen State Forest is the western gateway to the stunning Gardens of Stone area that we have been lobbying to see protected as a State Conservation Area (SCA).**

SCA's provide a 'win-win' situation for conservationists, the mining industry and the State as they allow low-impact underground mining to continue in an area while preserving much of the natural environment on the surface. The State can continue to invest in nature-based tourism and the biodiversity of the area can largely remain intact.

The Coalpac Consolidation Project proposal threatens to open-cut and highwall-mine 1,088 hectares of the Ben Bullen State Forest. Many of you will have attended the recent public meeting protesting against this proposal. This month we need to send in as many individual submissions as possible. (See page 3.)

Centennial Coal has already razed large areas of Ben Bullen SF at Lambert's Gully and Ivanhoe North open-cut Mine, and thousands of Hectares have been lost at Cullen Valley and Invincible open-cut mines.

If the Coalpac proposal is rejected by government it is likely that similarly damaging mining activities which are in the pipeline will be re-assessed; in effect, the authorities will be sending a message that they will not necessarily be allowed in areas perceived as having substantial environmental values.

### **Pine Dale Coal Mine Stage 2 Extension**

Blue Mountains Conservation Society and the Lithgow Environment Group have recently lodged objections with the Federal Government in the context of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, opposing the Pine Dale Coal Mine Stage 2 Extension, which consists of a proposal by Enhance Place Pty Ltd to open-cut mine 210 Hectares of *Ben Bullen State Forest*. Enhance have mining and exploration leases over a further 300 Ha of Ben Bullen SF, which they no doubt also aim to mine.

As with the Coalpac proposal, low-impact underground mining is both possible and economic at Pine Dale, although with a lesser return to the company. Such an environmentally sensitive approach would permit mining, whilst ensuring the retention of 200Ha of GoS2. However, corporate greed and the apparent lack of political will to look at the longer term value of environmentally sensitive regions, means that mining companies will generally select the mining option which maximises revenue, irrespective of the environmental consequences. It is generally possible to find a well-paid consultant to state that low-impact mining is too risky in the area under consideration.

The Lithgow Environment Group (LEG) has identified six Threatened fauna species on this site and others that are listed as Vulnerable. Several plant species on the site are listed as Threatened and there are many others of restricted distribution.

Lithgow Environment Group volunteers will continue to monitor flora and fauna over the proposed mining area and report any new findings via Hut News. Link to Pine Dale Mine Extension 2 on the NSW Planning web site:- [http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view\\_job&job\\_id=5086](http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=5086)

## **THE ROOTROT TROT: Searching for Phytophthora in Wollemi National Park**

**Tara Cameron**

From 10-14 April, the National Parks and Wildlife Service arranged for 16 volunteers divided into four teams to plunge into remote areas of Wollemi National Park in search for the fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*. I was privileged to be part of the project and participate in what became known as 'the Rootrot Trot'.

Society members will be aware that phytophthora causes dieback amongst many plants. Zoe-Joy Newby from the University of Sydney was a speaker at one of our monthly meetings and outlined how the fungus has affected many accessible areas in the Blue Mountains.

Phytophthora is obviously a concern to the health of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area so the Parks service wanted to investigate if it has spread into remote regions of the Parks. Through a federal government grant, the Service was able to arrange for a study into the problem.

The four teams of volunteers were dropped by helicopter into remote areas of Wollemi. I was a member of Ian Brown's team which walked from upper Koondah Creek north to Bare Rock Bluff, via Wollemi Creek. Geoff Luscombe (NPWS regional manager but volunteer on this walk) and his team investigated the area around the Koondah and Wollemi Creek junctions. Diedre Noss's group explored the ridge between Gaspers and Girribung Creeks, whilst the 'Koondah Krooners' led by Carol Isaacs, tackled the ridge above Koondah Creek. Each team collected up to 80 soil samples for processing by Zoe-Joy Newby and other volunteers at the Royal Botanical Gardens. We followed hygiene protocols which involved spraying boots and sampling equipment. This was not difficult and was worth it to make sure that we were not spreading the fungus!

The walking was not easy and the scrub was thick. However, the project was worth it and I look forward to finding out the results. If phytophthora is not present in remote regions, we will definitely want to keep it that way!! This may involve implementing some sort of hygiene protocols for remote trips. If phytophthora is found, then it may give some clues as to how the bush is coping with the fungus and have implications for future management.

The 'Rootrot Trot' was a great example of the Parks Service and members of the community working together to protect the bush we love. My thanks to all who made this possible. Tara Cameron.

### **Welcome to New Members**

Diane Jones, Springwood  
Lorraine Hooworth, Leura  
Danny Hunter, Orange  
Callum Hunter, Orange  
Imogen Hunter, Orange  
Carole Hunter, Orange

## Renewable Energy Target Scheme under attack

On 12<sup>th</sup> April, the state coalition government called for the end of the Renewable Energy Target (RET) scheme. The community organisation, 100% Renewable, responded with a media release and the accusation that:

“Hartcher misleads public as Liberals launch war on renewable energy” .....

*“Today’s IPART determination shows that the Renewable Energy Target has helped build clean, safe renewable energy across Australia while contributing exactly 0% to energy bill rises.*

*“The truth that Minister Hartcher will not tell the NSW public is that it is bad investment decisions by successive state governments that are really leading to rising energy bills. The reality is that while coal and gas are going up in price, renewable energy just keeps coming down. Renewable energy is already contributing to lower wholesale electricity prices.*

*“Here in the sunniest country in the world we should be expanding our renewable energy goals, not cutting them. 118 countries overseas now have renewable energy targets. Germany has a 30% renewable energy target by 2020, Denmark has just legislated a national target for 100% renewable energy by 2050 and Scotland has a 100% target by 2020.”*

Blue Mountains Conservation Society supports the stance taken by 100% Renewable in its media release. The Society has fought, and continues to fight, to prevent environmental damage from steaming (thermal) coal mining, an industry which would logically be phased out if renewable energy was given the same opportunity.

An aspect of the government’s announcement not covered by the 100% Renewable response is how the government apportions blame. At our current growth rate, nearly half the cost of infrastructure is due to **future** population growth. Hence, with a stable population, nearly half of the cost of desired infrastructure (\$750 billion nationally) would be unnecessary. In such a stable state (a steady state economy) the pressure to open new, or expand existing, coal mines would be markedly reduced, as would the almost obscene rush to exploit coal seam gas (CSG).

If all levels of government and all parts of the political spectrum, were to accept that unceasing growth is ultimately impossible in a finite world, we might be able to halt the inexorable erosion of quality-of-life, and perhaps save the remaining farmland, open space, reserves and national parks across greater west Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

**Peter Green**, Sustainable Population and Climate Change Officer

## It’s crunch time for the Sydney Rock Heritage Reserve Campaign

The current widening of the Great Western Highway at Lawson has involved re-routing the railway from south to north of Sydney Rock, replacing the old cutting with a new one to its north. In March 2010 Hut News, Eugene Stockton and Chris Whiteman proposed that the old cutting should be left open and the Rock and the adjacent railway property be reserved as a heritage item on account of its considerable historical, geological and botanical interest.

This proposal was raised with the NSW State Government, BMCC and the RMS (formerly RTA). The significance of this site is the accessibility to heritage items dating back to 1866 and a significant Blue Mountains Escarpment complex of plants growing in the abandoned railway cutting where Hawkesbury Sandstone can be seen overlying Narrabeen Shale/Sandstone. It is an ideal educational site. There are no other easily accessible places in the Blue Mountains where geological stratifications show clearly the contact between the Narrabeen Sandstone Series and the overlying Hawkesbury Sandstone. The unique wet cliff-line plant community in the northern face of the cutting includes some rare species, particularly the Cliff Teatree, *Leptospermum rupicola*, which is flowering at present.

Some acknowledgment was received from state and local government and RMS (RTA) back in 2010 but no clear statement as to what would be the final outcome. A concern is that the RMS had two or three plans for this area and never made it clear which plan they would follow. Are they going to take the cheapest and worst option and fill in this site with rubble taken from other areas?

A protest meeting was held on Friday 13 April and was attended by Roza Sage, State Member for the Blue Mountains, who expressed an interest in saving the site. The RMS has also committed to doing further geological assessments of the site.

Members can show their support for an educational reserve at Sydney Rock, with the abandoned railway cutting kept as it is, by contacting the Minister for Roads, Duncan Gay (Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrar Place, Sydney 2000, phone 9228 5271, email [office@gay.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@gay.minister.nsw.gov.au)) and the state representative for the Blue Mountains Roza Sage (132 Macquarie Road, Springwood 2777, phone 4751 3298, email [bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au)). For more information contact Chris Whiteman, 4758 7001, email [chriswht108@ymail.com](mailto:chriswht108@ymail.com)

## World Heritage Day Event for the Blue Mountains

A variety of community organisations with an environmental focus, including Blue Mountains Conservation Society, are coming together to host an event to demonstrate sustainable ways of living in the Blue Mountains and to encourage residents to get to know and respect the natural environment in which they live. Demonstrations and workshops will be held throughout the day as well as guided bush walks, exhibitions and stalls. Haydn Washington, co-author of *Climate Change Denial: Heads in the Sand* will be a guest speaker.

The event will take place at the Mid-Mountains Community Centre and Lawson Public School Hall throughout the day on Saturday, 16 June beginning at 9.30am. More details in the next issue or contact Jan on [jol2000@gmail.com](mailto:jol2000@gmail.com).

## Part 2: Hydro-power: a passport to damnation? Brian Marshall

Part 1 was in the April edition of Hut News.

In Part 1, I used the Three Gorges Dam (TGD) to show that 'saving' GGE by hydro-power supplanting a fossil-fuel source is 'green-wash' because the 'saving' is dwarfed by disproportionately larger increases in fossil-fuel power and ballooning GGE-production.

The TGD is just the tip of the iceberg! At 22,500 MW capacity, the TGD is dwarfed by the 13-dam cascade<sup>1</sup> (>70,000 MW) on the Jinsha River (the Upper Yangtze), and the Motuo Dam (38,000 MW) on the Yarlung Tsangpo River (Tibet), which is named the Brahmaputra in India. Of similar scale are the 13-dam cascade (~21,300 MW) on the Nu River, known as the Salween in Burma, and the 8-dam cascade (~15,550 MW) on the Lancang River which becomes the Mekong in Laos<sup>2</sup>. The latter two rivers, plus the Upper Yangtze pass through the Three Rivers World Heritage Area in their descent from the Tibetan Plateau into south-west China's Yunnan Province. All such impoundments impose extreme social, environmental, heritage and economic costs.

Rampant hydro-dam construction now characterises most developing countries, whereas most hydro-dam infrastructure in developed countries was completed in the first half of the twentieth century. Environmental organisations in developed countries are more attuned to the consequent social, archaeological and environmental damage than those in underdeveloped regions: the former, having long benefitted from developed hydro-resources, are accused of selfishly denying the advancement of underdeveloped peoples; the latter are castigated as indigenous 'nimbyists' opposing the entitlements of the ethnically different population. Economic growth is paramount.

In South America, the hydro-dam explosion is termed the "blue gold rush". The Amazon Basin hosts 60% of the planet's remaining tropical rainforests and has unparalleled biodiversity. At least 60 large dams are planned for the Brazilian Amazon, while the neighbouring countries plan to dam many of the 'feeder' rivers. The proposed Belo Monte Dam on the Xingu River (a tributary in the Lower Amazon Basin) could become the world's third largest hydro-electric plant (11,233 MW)<sup>3</sup>. Outside the Basin, the Itaipu Dam on the Parana River between Paraguay and Brazil has the World's second largest capacity (14,000 MW) and is first in terms of maximum annual production (94.7 TW-hours).

Hydro-dams abound (~200) in the underdeveloped countries of sub-Saharan Africa. Of these, the Grand Inga single dam in the African Congo will have a capacity of 39,000 MW. It will dwarf the TGD and is of similar size to the Chinese Motuo Dam. The environmental and social consequences are substantial, despite the dams being constructed to support mining and industrial development, and to enhance the standard-of-living of the local people. Unfortunately, any 'trickle-down' effect is robbed by corruption such that any flows-on to the poor become the sparsest of drips!

Why should large amounts of renewable hydro-power be contentious? First, most of the world's major rivers now have existing and planned hydro-dam complexes to the detriment of natural ecosystems. Second, the rivers on which hydro-power depends only comprise 0.00018% of the world's 'fresh water', and are particularly susceptible

to climate change impacts. Third, the global ratio of coal-fired power to hydro-power is ~10:1; it is exponentially increasing along with **total** energy production and GGE<sup>4</sup>. And last, **the cumulative outcome is environmentally unsustainable and effectively suicidal** – fossil fuels are finite, population growth and lifestyle advancement create ever-increasing energy demands and GGE-production, yet climate-change mitigation demands less GGE-production.

### To recapitulate!

- Demand for power-supply is driven by an increasingly unsustainable world population and the absurd notion of limitless economic growth.
- Hydro-power is a small renewable part of the power-source spectrum – claiming it 'saves' GGE when fossil-fuel (oil, coal, gas) power is growing at a much faster rate is specious.
- Dam and power-plant construction, the relocation of people, businesses and heritage to 'green-field' sites, and destruction of forests in the reservoir and 'green-field' areas all increase GGE.
- The adverse social, cultural and environmental impacts of dam construction are treated as collateral damage – the supposedly 'greater good' prevails, so let's hope the indigenous peoples and decaying ecosystems appreciate it!
- Governments, multinationals, big business and, at least in democracies, unashamedly self-interested voters determine the 'greater good'. Is this 'market forces', or the ethos of corporate greed, or do they differ? Do you trust the process or are we rushing lemming-like towards 'damnation'?

Hydro-power is a minor component of an energy spectrum dominated by fossil fuels. Because it is renewable (subject to climate change), it looms disproportionately large in the battle to preserve non-human species in the face of humanity's destructive capacity. Figures 1 and 2 are an attempt to show the possible trends of energy resources through to 2100. In both Figures and their source material<sup>5</sup> there is a substantial energy deficit due to the progressive exhaustion of fossil-fuel resources. This has major implications for the global population and its standard-of-living.

The World's population currently exceeds 7 billion and could reach 9 billion by 2050 and 10 billion by 2100<sup>6</sup>. These predictions largely reflect life-expectancy and fertility rates. They effectively disregard the availability of energy resources to support such a population and its cumulative aspirations. Yet regardless of their current standards-of-living, all societies want standard-of-living improvements, and this has implications for food and water supplies, energy requirements, GGE, and climate change.

There are two end-member ways of reconciling the growing population and energy requirements: either energy resources must be expanded to meet total demand, or the world's population must be reduced. The former boosts GGE-production; the latter should counter it. Those who believe in humanity's ingenuity argue that energy supply must be expanded to meet population increases and promote economic growth, so I will firstly examine this end-member. (continued on page 7)

**Part 2: Hydro-power: a passport to damnation?**  
(continued from page 6)

For the population of ~3.3 billion in 1965, the average energy consumption expressed as tonnes of oil equivalent (**toe**) per person per year is ~1.2 (Fig. 2). From 2007 to 2011, the population rose from 6.6 to 7+ billion at an average consumption of ~1.7 **toe**, signifying an improved standard-of-living and increased GGE; but whereas China, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (some 2.7 billion people) collectively averaged 0.8 **toe**, the North American consumption was about 8.0<sup>5</sup> – much is hidden within an average! If a 1.7 **toe** is applied to populations of 9 and 10 billion for 2050 and 2100 respectively, the total energy requirements are 15,300 and 17,000 Mtoe per year, amounting to increases over today's value (~11,800 Mtoe) of approximately 30% and 44%. **Yet these are minimum increases, because developed countries would hope to at least retain their standards-of-living, and developing countries would expect to radically improve theirs.** For example, the **2050** energy requirements for a not unreasonable range of 2-2.5 **toe** per person per year would be 18,000-22,500 Mtoe per year. It is totally unclear how such vast increases in the World's energy production could be achieved given the finite nature of fossil fuels, the lead times needed for today's nuclear plants (let alone those using technologies which have yet to attain commercial production), and the limited residual hydro-power capacity.

There are of course other (non-hydro) renewables. Mark Diesendorf<sup>7</sup> states that Australia and certain developed countries could obtain 80-100% of their needs from a spectrum of renewable sources (including hydro) by 2050. However, this claim is made within the context of transitioning from existing fossil-fuel dependency whilst maintaining 'business-as-usual'. Whether renewables can meet the energy requirements arising from global-population increases and standard-of-living aspirations is contentious, but remains an admirable objective in a World where economic growth and GGE-reduction are currently opposed.

The other end-member involves declining energy supplies driving 'involuntary' population reductions. Chefurka<sup>6</sup> uses an increasing energy deficit to show that the World's population will inevitably decay to less than 2 billion people, thereby resulting in an average energy consumption of ~1 **toe** per person per year. He believes the massive population losses would arise from famine, exposure to heat and cold, rampant diseases due to a loss of urban medical and sanitation services, and wars on a range of scales over scarce resources and 'have'/'have not' disparities. The massive death-rates needed for the 'overpopulation' to reduce to levels compatible with the declining resource-base would surely threaten the fabric of civilization. This is very much a doomsday scenario.

In Figures 1 and 2, I have modified Chefurka's graphs<sup>6</sup> by considering the role of CSG, increasing the contributions from other renewables and hydro, and allowing a bigger contribution from nuclear sources in the latter half of the century<sup>8</sup>. The net result is that there will be a total energy decline, but it will be less abrupt and result in a lesser deficit. This will correspondingly lessen the impact on population levels and the social fabric, as communities adjust to perhaps 1.3 **toe** per person per year. There will still be economic contraction, massive

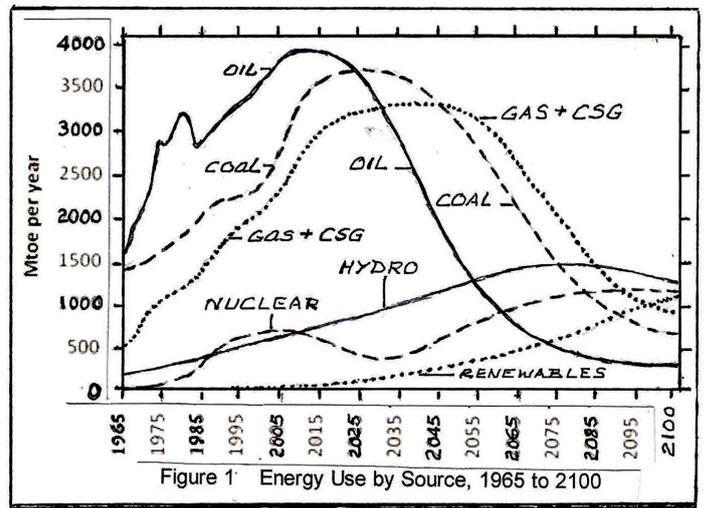


Figure 1 Energy Use by Source, 1965 to 2100

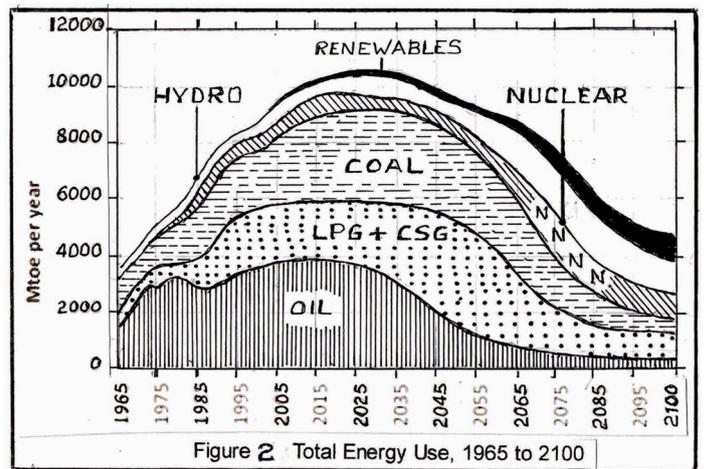


Figure 2 Total Energy Use, 1965 to 2100

unemployment, and a reduction of services such that disparities between 'haves' and 'have nots' will be exacerbated at all scales. Perhaps not totally doomsday, but major depression, deprivation and death will occur. The good news is that GGE will be reduced!

Between the above end-member situations lies a more realistic answer. Renewables (including hydro) must be phased in to progressively replace **all** fossil-fuel and nuclear energy forms, the transition must be used to actively curtail total energy consumption through reduction-targets, pricing policies and other efficiencies, energy consumption per capita must be reduced in developed countries and communities to lessen 'have'/'have not' disparities, population-control must be addressed by governments and individuals, and the unsustainable growth paradigm must be put back in its box and the lid nailed down!

**In summary:**

- Hydro-dams are an important part of a commitment to renewable energy sources; they must not be an adjunct to energy policies driven by over-population and unsustainable economic growth.
- If you believe that the World is over-populated and obsessed with unsustainable economic growth using finite natural resources, that this is driving GGE and climate change, and this will have catastrophic environmental consequences, then your position should be clear: developed and developing countries are compromising the World's future, and hydro-dams are a component of the environmental desecration linked to a growth-driven energy-spectrum.

(continued on page 8)

## Part 2: Hydro-power: a passport to damnation?

(continued from page 7)

- If you conversely believe that humanity's ingenuity will enable unfettered economic growth, accommodate population growth, and 'deal with' climate change (or deny it), then your position should equally be clear: developed and developing countries must exploit all forms of power generation as they hurtle towards a utopian society – or perhaps oblivion!
- If you alternatively believe that the economic-growth paradigm is embedded in 'our' psyche, the developing countries are entitled to seek the developed economies' standards-of-living, and the adverse impacts of 'our' standards-of-living must be handled through mitigation/adaptation, then your position is the *status quo*: market-based 'carbon pricing' will supposedly reduce GGE, and developing countries are urged to supplant fossil-fuel energy with renewable sources (including hydro); but governments procrastinate and none of it must hurt!

**And finally:** if we follow the *status quo*, is it logical to use a market-based approach to resolve the very problem which the market and its unsustainable growth paradigm created?

<sup>1</sup> Dam cascades are particularly important where the river gradient is relatively steep (compared to a mature gradient) in that the profile lends itself to many smaller dams at less cost than a massive major dam with a high wall and a disproportionately small reservoir. Nevertheless, dam cascades are susceptible to the 'domino' effect – if the one at the top fails the water surge can progressively destroy all those downstream.

<sup>2</sup> The extent of these dams and their impacts on river systems are best conveyed by maps and longitudinal sections; these were shown at the Monthly Meeting but are unsuited to reproduction in terms of space and quality in Hut News.

<sup>3</sup> This relates to the current Wikipedia list [[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_largest\\_hydroelectric\\_power\\_stations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_largest_hydroelectric_power_stations)] but as various planned dams are completed the order will evolve!

<sup>4</sup> From 2004 to 2008 energy production and GGE both increased by 10% while population increased by 5%; the demands of population- and economic-growth clearly drive power production and GGE.

<sup>5</sup> The figure is modified from *World Energy and Population Trends to 2100* by Paul Chefurka – for information on the derivation of this and his other projections, including sources and assumptions, go to <http://www.paulchefurka.ca/WEAP/WEAP.html>

<sup>6</sup> This is based on the median fertility variant – see [http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Analytical-Figures/html/fig\\_1.htm](http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Analytical-Figures/html/fig_1.htm)

<sup>7</sup> Mark Diesendorf, *One hundred per cent renewable electricity for Australia*, Hut News No 291, April 2012, p11.

<sup>8</sup> These changes are speculative and reflect my 'guesstimates' rather than soundly based research.

## Domestic dogs as an environmental disturbance agent

Simone Williams

A recent thesis (October 2011) by Bob Holderness-Roddam assessed the environmental impact of domestic dogs. Key themes of the thesis focused on the role of domestic dogs in ecological disturbance, and the consequences for native wildlife, particularly vertebrate species in Tasmania, through examination of data from three sources. Remediation and mitigation measures were also recommended.

### The role of domestic dogs in ecological disturbance.

- Disturbance effects of domestic dogs may include:
- Predation through killing or physical injury, or chasing
- Flushing of birds and nest disturbance
- Energetic loss, increased vigilance and lost foraging opportunities for potential prey species
- Introduced disease, such as parvovirus and canine distemper
- Hybridisation with native canids; and
- Use of agricultural land to produce pet food

### Consequences for native wildlife.

Data was obtained from three discrete sources:

- The Resource Management and Conservation section of the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (2006-2011)
- The Australian Wildlife Health Centre – Wildlife Hospital at Healesville Sanctuary in Victoria (2008-2010); and
- Tasmanian veterinarians, represented through a three month diary of wildlife presentations recorded by ten practices (March – May 2011).

Trends shown by the data:

- Domestic dogs have a more deleterious effect than domestic cats on native wildlife in Tasmania
- Effects are most prevalent in urban and suburban areas and on beaches
- The Tasmanian Resource Management and Conservation data shows as a class, mammals were far more likely to be killed or injured by dogs (192) compared with birds (37) or reptiles (12). Of the mammals attacked, macropods were the most common.
- The Australian Wildlife Health Centre-Wildlife Hospital showed that dogs were responsible for more attacks upon reptiles (45) than either mammals (37) or birds (33). Dogs were the main perpetrator of reptile attacks.

### Recommendations.

Actions that may be considered under local and/or state government planning include:

- Covenants to exclude pet ownership in sensitive wildlife areas, and limiting development
- Fencing off and temporarily closure of areas, particularly during breeding seasons
- Provision of buffer zones between wildlife and recreation areas
- Control of access points and location of paths, tracks and trails
- Closure of areas to dog walking and/or all recreational activity
- Limiting of dog licences to reduce faecal loading from dogs, and dealing with dog faeces to reduce damage to waterways; and
- Vaccinating against diseases that may adversely affect native wildlife.

## Loose Feathers, with Carol Proberts

Long wispy cirrus clouds stretch across the blue sky, and every few moments the sky fills with waves of small birds, flying north at treetop level. These are the migrating honeyeaters, travelling from their breeding areas in the south-east of the country to their winter feeding areas somewhere north of here.

The migration of Yellow-faced and White-naped Honeyeaters is arguably the most conspicuous migration of any land birds in Australia, and there is no better place to see it happen than right here in the Blue Mountains. You can watch them streaming along their traditional pathways at Wentworth Falls, Narrow Neck, or crossing Shipley Road at the top of the Megalong Valley, on suitable fine weather mornings in April and May. The "chip chip..." contact call of the Yellow-faced Honeyeaters becomes a defining soundtrack to autumn for those who are familiar with them.

Suddenly the calls change. Agitated alarm calls ring out across the heath. At once the flocks dive for cover, and all the activity stops. Seconds later, a goshawk silently glides over. It takes quite a few minutes before the birds emerge from the vegetation and start moving around again.

Fast-flying birds of prey which specialise in catching smaller birds include the Peregrine Falcon, Australian Hobby, Brown Goshawk and Collared Sparrowhawk. In autumn these raptors patrol the areas where the migrating flocks are concentrated along the escarpment and at the heads of gullies. Any birds slow to react are likely to be snatched from the air in its talons.

Birds are able to recognise and respond to the alarm calls of other species - a sort of heterospecific eavesdropping. The vociferous black, white and yellow New Holland Honeyeaters (not one of the migrating species but often abundant wherever there are banksias flowering) are particularly good "watchdogs", their harsh staccato calls alerting all the other species to the presence of a predator. The native but pesky Noisy Miner can play a similar role.

Birds have different alarm calls for different types of predator. A swift-flying bird of prey requires a different response to a snake, or a cat, for example. Astute birdwatchers can also learn to recognise these alarm calls and look for the predator. And this is not only the case in autumn, but at any time when small birds gather in groups.

**Carol Proberts** ([origma@westnet.com.au](mailto:origma@westnet.com.au))



*Photos:*  
(top) Australian Hobby  
(left) Yellow-faced Honeyeater  
(Carol Proberts)



## Membership Application Form

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

Address: .....  
..... PC .....

Phone(s) .....

Email .....

MEMBERSHIP FEES (please circle one item)

Single \$30 Concession (Senior/Student)\$20  
Household \$35 Concession (Senior/Student)\$25  
Corporate (open to negotiation) \$100

Bushwalkers only:  
(\$20 per walker per annum) \$.....

Donation (tax-deductible) \$.....

Send my copy of Hut News by  
Please tick box  mail  internet only

TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$.....

Note: All fees include GST at the relevant rate.

Would you like to be involved in any of the following activities or working groups? (Please underline): Land use/development issues; Environmental Education; Threatened species issues; Web or database management; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Society administration.

**I/We agree to support the aims and objectives of the Society as set out on reverse side of this membership application:**

Please sign if named above.

Signature(s) 1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

ENQUIRIES: Phone (02 4757 1872  
Email: [membership@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:membership@bluemountains.org.au)

Please cut out and forward this form with your cheque or money order to:

**Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.**  
**PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782**  
**or pay online at [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)**

### The fish we choose today will directly affect the health of our oceans tomorrow

Overfishing, destructive fishing gear and poor aquaculture practices impact significantly on our seas, marine wildlife and habitats. An incredible 80% of the world's fish stocks are now over-exploited or fished right up to their limit.

Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide Online was developed in response to growing public concern about overfishing and its impact on our oceans and their wildlife. It is designed to help you make informed seafood choices and play a part in swelling the tide for sustainable seafood in Australia.

Australian Marine Conservation Society  
(<http://www.amcs.org.au>)

## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community organisation working to achieve the preservation and regeneration of the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.

The Society believes that World Heritage status provides an opportunity for local community members to become custodians of the unique biodiversity and scenery of the Blue Mountains.

The Mission of the Society is to help conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains.

The Aims and Objectives of the Society are to:

- Disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation.
- Promote the need for ecological sustainability.
- Protect the natural environment—flora, fauna, habitat, water, land and air.
- Actively oppose those human activities which degrade or destroy the natural environment.
- Repair the adverse effects of human activities upon the environment.
- Encourage the love of the natural environment by conducting a regular program of bushwalks.
- Increase the pool of expert knowledge about the natural environment, through meetings, excursions, research and other activities.
- Provide information to the public on matters of Conservation, especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls.
- Maintain close and friendly relations with like-minded groups.



Down the Wallaby Track: a backward glance, with John Low

## THE WEARY OLD TREE

“We look aloft at the skeleton arms of the weary-looking old tree [and] think of the kingly explorers”, wrote a ‘globe-trotting’ visitor in 1895. He was, of course, speaking of Katoomba’s Explorers’ (or Marked) Tree which by then was indeed weary and in fact dying and which today is a sad dead stump that, having recently been savaged by a feral four-wheel drive, is humiliatingly wrapped like a small Christo/Jeanne-Claude art installation.

Widely recognised as a tangible reminder of the 1813 expedition of Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth it is, nevertheless, difficult to determine when the tree first came to public notice and unclear what letters might originally have been carved into its bark. Accordingly, its authenticity has periodically been questioned, stimulating some lively debate in the columns of the local and city press.

Despite the motley cross section of humanity who walked or rode by during the fifty years after the opening of the Western Road, the first definitive reference to the Marked Tree did not appear until 1867. In August that year in a letter on eucalypts written to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the botanist Rev. William Wools made a passing comment that the tree “on which the late Mr. W. Lawson cut his initials with a tomahawk in 1813 still presents the letters as legible as ever”. From this point the sightings began to accumulate. Eccleston Du Faur “found the L tree” while walking back from Mt. Victoria in the 1870s. John Kirkpatrick, the architect of the Carrington Hotel, claimed to have seen “the distinct initials WL, GB, WCW” before lobbying the government to erect a stone wall around it in 1884. As Australia’s centenary approached the tree began to arouse strong feelings and its status as a historic site was established.

Celebrity, however, came at a cost. *Cassell’s Picturesque Australasia* (1887), stated that “the letters W and L are still visible, though time has obliterated the B altogether”. When our ‘Globe Trotter’ arrived in 1895 he observed that the “unknown herd” were also carving their names “in every style, on the sacred tree”, while by 1903 a local souvenir booklet was lamenting that “the letters notched on that great day are not now traceable, save by a pre-conceived imagination”. About this time, too, the old tree finally expired and its upper trunk was removed as dangerous. Blossoming with the calling cards of guests, it survived as a curiosity in the grounds of the Hydro Majestic until destroyed by fire in 1922.

The stump, of course, remained *in situ* and, within a few years, initials miraculously reappeared – reported in 1905 as “W B above and L below”. A central icon of our folklore, it became a symbol of empire in 1913 and of Australian nationalism in the re-enactments of 1951 and 1963. With the bicentenary of the Blue Mountains crossing fast approaching, it will be interesting to see what role this small roadside shrine will play in these very different times.

John Low ([johnlow@iprimus.com.au](mailto:johnlow@iprimus.com.au))

Photo: The Explorers’ Tree, ca. 1900.  
Blue Mountains City Library, Local Studies Section.

## Powerful Owl Project

BirdLife Australia's Birds in Backyards program is continuing and expanding its Powerful Owl project based on a pilot program run last year. The project will help us to understand important new information about the status, distribution, site fidelity, breeding success and habitat requirements of these large forest owls in the Sydney region. This information will ultimately inform conservation measures for this threatened species.

The project is again looking for interested members of the public to help us find out more about these birds. Volunteers within the Sydney region are being sought to become Owl Observers and participate in surveys. Owl Observers will check in on a breeding pair of Powerful Owls near them and report back regularly on what is happening at the nest. Owl Observers do not need to monitor at night (although some dusk visits may be needed).

The project is also looking for sightings of Powerful Owls from Kiama to Newcastle and west to the Blue Mountains. To find out more, submit a sighting (please include where, when and anything interesting) or to register as an Owl Observer please visit our website <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/surveys/Powerful-Owl-Project> or email us directly at [powerfulowl@birdlife.org.au](mailto:powerfulowl@birdlife.org.au).

## Skill Sharing Workshops

Sharing skills is a great way of building both friendship and resilience in a community. Blue Mountains and Transition Blue Mountains have collaborated to provide a range of reskilling/living skills workshops over the coming months. Anyone is welcome to attend and if you have skills that you would like to share please contact [info@transitionbluemountains.org.au](mailto:info@transitionbluemountains.org.au)

- ◆ Mud Brick Houses: Saturday 19 May, 10am-12pm, Wentworth Falls. A discussion with Arthur & Rosemary, [lathouris@bigpond.com](mailto:lathouris@bigpond.com)
- ◆ Winter Garden Workshop: Saturday 16 June, 1pm - 4pm, Wentworth Falls, Rosemary Lathouris, [lathouris@bigpond.com](mailto:lathouris@bigpond.com)
- ◆ Fruit Tree Pruning: Sunday 24 June, 10:30am - 2pm, North Katoomba, Brian and Wayne, [bmpower@live.com](mailto:bmpower@live.com)
- ◆ Crocheting Using Silk and Wool: Saturday 30 June, 10am - 1pm, Hazelbrook, Maryanne Bell, [maryanne@belldesigns.info](mailto:maryanne@belldesigns.info)

Entry by Gold coin donation. For more information, phone Clare 4782 4897.

The two groups have also put together an informative and stimulating series of talks and films which are held monthly on Tuesday nights at 7.30pm at Lawson Bowling Club, Loftus Street, Lawson. For more information email [infor@transitionbluemountains.org.au](mailto:infor@transitionbluemountains.org.au) or [info@permaculturebluemountains.net](mailto:info@permaculturebluemountains.net)

### BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

'Like' us on Facebook: Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
Follow us on Twitter: [bmcsnsw](https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw)



## A day at Taronga Zoo Christine Davies

Blue Mountains Conservation Society sponsors an animal at Taronga Zoo—a Feathertail Glider. This choice was made a few years ago because the Feathertail Glider is a native animal which lives in the Blue Mountains and is probably quite common in our neighbouring bushland, but as it is small and nocturnal it is rarely seen and most people are unaware of its existence. It is the smallest gliding animal in the world and feeds on nectar, pollen and insects.

During the recent school holidays I went to Taronga Zoo with my grand-daughter Sylvia. I had not been there for many years. It was an exhausting day—more than five hours train travel, two ferry rides, and walking to see just about every animal an 11 year-old child who has never been to a zoo before wants to see. Fortunately there is a chair lift to take you from the bottom to the top of the zoo, and a little train which we used to backtrack to see the platypus and the nocturnal animals which we had missed on the way down.

It was delightful to actually see a Feathertail Glider in the Nocturnal House. The size of a very small mouse, it was walking on the wall of the enclosure—a vertical pane of glass!

Other highlights were the Seal Show and the Bird Show. The Seal Show was all about education and demonstrating the skills these animals use in the wild, about some of the dangers such as entrapment, and quite a bit of showing off by the stars of the show who seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves.

The QBE Free-flight Bird Show has to be seen to be believed. We were waiting in the amphitheatre, with a stunning view of Sydney Harbour as a backdrop, and a white dove landed on a fence, touched something with its beak and released a sign—the Free-flight Bird Show was on! Birds were swooping over the arena, barely missing our heads. An incredible display of skill and agility, and a great way to learn about some of our native birds. There were birds of prey, an owl, Red-tailed Black Cockatoos, a buzzard which breaks open emu eggs with a rock, and many more.

Sydney Water has a "drink tap water" campaign, with signs saying things like "do elephants drink tap water?". Unfortunately the only place I could find to refill my water bottle was from a tap in the hand basin of the public toilet. Drinking fountains like those we saw at Manly Beach would have been very welcome.

## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY BUSHWALKING ACTIVITIES

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. The BMCS Bushwalking Guide which explains the numbered grades can be found on the Society's website [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942 email [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricekerkham@hotmail.com) or write to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782. **Late changes to the program will be published on the website.**

**SATURDAY WALKS:** Usually a full day longer walk at a faster pace. Before attending ring the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy 4758 6009 or email [jp34@tpg.com.au](mailto:jp34@tpg.com.au)

- May 12 **Baal Bone Point.** Spectacular 360 degree views—2 x 4WDs needed. Leader Bob 4757 2694. Meet Wentworth Falls Stockyard carpark (7.30 am) or Gearins Hotel CP (8 am). Approx 8 km. Grade 3. Cullen Bullen/Ben Bullen maps.
- May 19 **Narrowneck to Castle Head, Phantom Cave and return via Diamond Falls.** Leader Liz 4754 4966. Meet at Katoomba Gearins Hotel CP 9am. Approx 6-7 km. Grade 3. Katoomba map.
- May 26 **Mystery walk**—some exploratory, scrambling. Wet feet. Party limit of 8 as wilderness area. **BOOK NOW** to avoid disappointment. Leader Hugh 4757 3145 or 0423 309 854. For more information contact leader, best before 8pm (SMS if unanswered). Grade 3. Mount Wilson map.
- June 2 **Mount Hay and Boorong Crags.** Steep descent 100+m and ascent 160+m. 4WD preferred. Leader Jim 4758 6009. Meet at Leura School, Mount Hay Road 8.30 am. Approx 10 km. Grade 3. Katoomba/Mount Wilson maps.
- June 9 **Another Mystery Walk**, this time in the Deep Pass area (perhaps) with a good chance of wet feet. Leader Emanuel 4757 1090 after 7pm. More info—contact leader, phone or email [emanuelanddi@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emanuelanddi@yahoo.com.au). Approx 6 km. Grade 3. Rock Hill map.
- June 16 **Pinnacles track to Walford Walls.** Great views into the Grose Canyon. Leader Bob 4757 2694. Meet at Wentworth Falls Stockyard CP, 8am, or Gearins Hotel CP 8.30am. Approx 8 km. Grade 3. Katoomba/Mount Wilson maps.

Check the BMCS website ([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)) for updates.

**MONDAY LEISURE WALKS:** Short Day walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of an average fitness. Bring morning tea and lunch and adequate water. The Group Co-ordinator is Maurice Kerkham, 4739 4942, [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricekerkham@hotmail.com)

- May 14 **Lockley's Pylon.** "Best views of the Grose and Mounts Hay and Banks". Grade 2. Contact Mary 4757 4569. Meet Leura Station car park 9.30am Car pool.
- May 21 **BUS TRIP to Oberon. Walk to Tarana.** Lunch at Tarana pub. Fare \$12. Book/pay Keith 4736 1010. Grade exploratory. Leader Maurice 4739 4942. Meet rear Springwood Civic Centre 8am sharp, pickups along the way.
- May 28 **Ikara Head.** Ridgetop walk to edge of Grose. Grade 2. Leader Judith 4758 6310. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45am. Car pool.
- June 4 **Lapstone Zig Zag and Elizabeth Lookout.** Great views to Sydney. Grade 2. Leader Heather 4739 1493. Meet Glenbrook commuter carpark 9.30 am.

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:** Walks of 2-3 hours conducted at a leisurely pace to suit walkers on the day. Bring morning tea, adequate water and lunch if noted. Group Co-ordinator is Beverley Thompson, 4757 2076,

- May 10 **Deanei Reserve, Springwood.** Wander through a blue gum forest. Meet behind Springwood Civic Centre 9.30am. Contact Maurice 47394942. Grade 2.
- May 17 **City walk to Lavender Bay** with option of climbing bridge pylon. Take lunch. Meet top of escalators Central Station 9.30am. Contact Chris 4757 2864. Grade 1-2.
- May 24 **Water Nymph's Dell, Wentworth Falls.** Delightful walk into rainforest. Some scrambling. Steps to climb out. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls Station, 9:30am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Grade 2.
- May 31 **Leura Cascades, Leura.** Round walk. Cliff top walk to lookouts. Views of falls and cascades. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Cnr Mall and Megalong St, Leura 10:30am. Leader Joan c/o 47572076. Grade 2.
- June 7 **Birdwood Gully to Madeline Glen.** Springwood. Walk through rainforest and unusual rock formations. Meet behind Springwood Civic Centre 9:30am. Leader Maurice 47394942. Grade 1/2.
- June 14 **Adeline Park and Falls, Faulconbridge.** Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Faulconbridge Station Car Park 10am. Leader Maurice 47394942. Grade 2.

## Blue Gum Forest Campaign – 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary

The Grose Valley became "the cradle of the modern conservation movement in NSW" when Blue Gum Forest was saved from threatened destruction in 1931-32.

A group from the Sydney Bush Walkers club, led by Alan Rigby, was camped in the forest when they chanced upon a Bilpin farmer, Clarrie Hungerford. Hungerford had a lease of the forest and told the bushwalkers he planned to clear the blue gums to plant walnuts.

The bushwalkers went away and started a campaign to stop him. Eventually, they raised 130 pounds which they paid

Hungerford in exchange for his relinquishing the lease.

The 80th Anniversary of the saving of the Blue Gum Forest will be on Sunday 2nd September 2012.

Plans are being made to celebrate and to raise awareness of the conservation movement. You'll hear more about plans in the coming months.

**The Greater Blue Mountains World  
Heritage Experience**  
[www.worldheritage.org.au](http://www.worldheritage.org.au)