

# HUT NEWS

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January 2016



*"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"*

## Oppose the Western Sydney Airport proposal

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Western Sydney Airport can be found on <http://westernsydneyairport.gov.au/resources/deis/index.aspx>

Submissions close on **18 December 2015**.

The Draft EIS glosses over most of the threats facing the Greater Blue Mountains.

Impacts on the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and Declared Wilderness Areas through air, noise and water pollution are unacceptable.

The EIS fails to recognise the value of quiet places for nature and for our tourist industry. Aircraft are not an environmentally sustainable form of transport. An east coast high speed rail using renewable energy can eliminate the perceived "need" for a second Sydney Airport.

Please help to stop this insane proposal. Write a submission. A simple letter will suffice.

On Page 3 of this newsletter, Ross Coster discusses recent activities of the No Western Sydney Airport Subcommittee and gives some suggestions on how to write a submission.

## 90% renewable energy plan

The Australian Greens has launched a plan to transition Australia to at least 90% renewable energy by 2030. The plan offers two scenarios, both of which see a new government authority called RenewAustralia set up to help drive the transition. It can be viewed at [http://renewaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2015/11/2015\\_11\\_Renew\\_Australia.pdf](http://renewaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2015/11/2015_11_Renew_Australia.pdf)

The party says their plan will create tens of thousands of jobs in the design and construction of new renewable energy generation, plus employment in operations and maintenance. The Greens also intend putting a price back on carbon, saying it is essential to Australia's future prosperity.

The two pathways offered aim to reduce Australia's overall greenhouse emissions by at least 29% between now and 2030.

## BMCS Native Plant Nursery—Volunteers at work



Customers at our nursery's stall at the Blackheath Community Market.

Some of the Blackheath nursery crew. L to R: Chris, Keith, Marg, Fiona, Mick, David, Malcolm, Wendy, Sue Nicol seated. (Photo by Jana Mader)



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## Nursery News

For much of the past month the nurseries at Blackheath and Lawson have been run by a team of wonderful volunteers (some of them are in the photo on page 1) while the manager took leave to become a granny for the second time.

The amazing growth in the seedlings was spectacular after a four week absence.

We have a great range of healthy plants for sale now. Some of the new season's crop of waratahs are ready. We have the Cliff Mallee (*Eucalyptus cunninghamii*), lots of Callistemons, and a "new release" - *Libertia paniculata*—a type of native Iris with white flowers, to name just a few.

See you at the Lawson nursery or at our last market for the year at Lawson on 20 December. The nursery will close for the Christmas/New Year break from 21 December and reopen on 13 January 2016.

Happy planting.

**Sue Nicol,**  
**Nursery Manager.**



*Libertia paniculata*  
 The Australian Plants  
 Society  
[www.australianplants.net.au](http://www.australianplants.net.au)

### BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

Our nursery offers the home gardener, landscaper or large contractor a big variety of quality local native plants at economical prices.

**Lawson Nursery**, Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 9am to noon.

The nursery is located in the Lawson Industrial Area on the corner of Park and Cascade Streets - see map on our website [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au).

**Blackheath Community Market**, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm.

**Magpie Market**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm.

Nursery will be closed for Christmas/New Year Holidays from 21 December, reopens 13 January 2016.

Tube stock \$3. Larger pots available.

Discounts for bulk orders and large contracts.

Enquiries Sue Nicol 4787 8887, [nursery@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:nursery@bluemountains.org.au)

### DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF HUT NEWS IS 16 JANUARY 2016

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 PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

### BMCS Planning and Development Resource Kit

Do you want to take action on an environmental issue in your neighbourhood or the Blue Mountains more broadly?

Do you want information about the laws and procedures relating to development and environmental protection?

Find out what **YOU** can do! Go to the Planning and Development Resource Kit

[www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml](http://www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml)

## Western Sydney Airport – What Are We Doing? Ross Coster

The No Western Sydney Airport Sub-Committee now consists of 13 people, seven of them Members of BMCS (Bob, Don, Christine, Jon, Keith, Letitia and Ross), the rest being residents and Members of other groups (Andrea, Joanne, Noel, Peter, Nadia and Wendy).

We have been in constant contact by e-mail for some months now, planning strategies, designing leaflets and bumper stickers, and now studying the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

We have also met physically once (five of us), at my home, to get to know each other and to take apart the EIS.

We have printed a batch of 500 'Cartoon' bumper stickers and 1,000 'No Planes' bumper stickers, and those of you who get Hut News by mail were sent one of each. The remainder have been handed out by hardy people at various public forums.

Both my car and my wife's wear both stickers – do yours?

The original leaflet, prepared by Christine, and included as part of September Hut News, is now obsolete and is not being re-printed.

I am working on a more comprehensive leaflet for a larger print run and wider distribution now.

The EIS has been broken up into 'sections' by the Authors, and we have people studying and taking notes on each section, to be compiled into a final submission before the 18<sup>th</sup> December closing date.

The campaign will not stop with the EIS closure, as the decision to proceed is political and we just cannot give up trying to get politicians to change their minds on this critical issue.

Some of us have attended various 'Community Information Sessions' on the proposed Airport, handing out leaflets, getting people to sign letters asking for an extension to the EIS exhibition period (which was successful – we got 60 days rather than the original 20), and getting people to sign a petition (organised by the Blue Mountains Greens).

I have personally done a mountain of reading, and written six (now seven) articles for Hut News.

We have written letters to politicians (33 of them!) and journalists (the Gazette used content in an article), but received very few positive replies.

In summary, the LNP want a no-curfew, 24-hour Airport with no rail links to anywhere, Labor want an Airport, but with a curfew and a rail link, and the Greens oppose the Airport and prefer High Speed Rail.

Some people I have spoken with at various meetings tell me that an Airport is 'needed', which is plainly wrong. The East Coast High Speed Rail has the potential to remove 50% of traffic from Mascot, extending the life of the existing Airport indefinitely.

Some other people advocate lifting the curfew at Mascot as a solution, which is again wrong as imposing noise on *anyone* at night is outrageous.

In recent weeks activity and activism on the Airport has become quite frenetic, with a public meeting hosted by Labor receiving 450 attendees and plenty of media coverage, and several new Facebook groups popping up to oppose the Airport.

Have a look for 'No BCA', 'No Badgerys Creek Airport' and 'Opposing Western Sydney Airport' on Facebook if you can, as these people are smart, energetic and committed.

You can expect to see posters, placards and bumper stickers popping up around the Mountains as the energy builds.

To those who are part of the Sub-Committee, I am eternally grateful for your effort and support.

We live in the Blue Mountains to enjoy the quiet, get close to nature, be part of our community, and we do not want noisy planes ruining it all.

Ross Coster [nwsa@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:nwsa@bluemountains.org.au)

### What Can YOU Do?

We need you to write a Submission to the EIS opposing the Airport.

A simple letter will suffice, posted to:

Department of Infrastructure and Regional  
Development  
Western Sydney Airport Submission  
Western Sydney Unit  
GPO Box 594  
Canberra ACT 2601

If you prefer e-mail (which may be less effective), then the address is:

[WSAsubmission@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:WSAsubmission@infrastructure.gov.au)

There is also a Web Form available at:

<http://westernsydneyairport.gov.au/resources/deis/submissions.aspx>

There is a guide on our Web Site on what to say:

[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

If you are not keen on the Internet, then some points to include are:

- Impact on the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains through Air, Noise and Water pollution are unacceptable
- Flying aircraft over declared Wilderness areas destroys the whole point of Wilderness, which is a place where nature can operate without interference and people can enjoy the quiet
- Aircraft are not a sustainable form of transport as they burn fossil fuels that cannot be replaced
- High Speed Rail to Melbourne and Brisbane would delay the 'need' for another airport indefinitely.

## Protect the Gardens of Stone

### Review recommends approval of Airly Mine Extension

The Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) has recommended approving the Airly Mine Extension. Airly Mine extension is largely under the Mugii-Murum-ban State Conservation Area (Mugii SCA) west of Capertee. Mugii SCA has great diversity of flora, a spectacular cultural heritage and the greatest range and concentration of pagoda rock formations in the Greater Blue Mountains.

The PAC's review report does not recommend increasing protection of the pagodas and cliffs or the endangered plants nor does it address the predicted loss of water flows.

The report concentrates on the subsidence impacts raised in submissions and, unusually, raised by the Department of Resources and Energy itself.

The report recommends strengthening the proposed experts' panel to an Independent Experts Panel. Before determination of the project, this Panel would review all submitted material on subsidence and advise particularly on predicted subsidence in the new Hartley shale mine area and on the adequacy of the management regime. In other words, the PAC would not determine this project without further assessment of all the material on subsidence.

The PAC recommends that the role of the independent Panel should not be merely advisory. The PAC also recommended this for the Springvale mine extension but it was not included in the final determination of that project.

The PAC recommends that the mining company provide a timetable and plan for the mining. This was a serious omission in the proposal.

Disappointingly, the review understates the values of Mugii SCA, only referring to the scenic values of the cliffs and pagodas. As well, there is no discussion of the poor onsite water management issues raised at the PAC (the mixing of mine discharge water with fresh water).

The PAC also appears to rate the economic argument for the project as not particularly strong, referring to "ambiguities" in the potential revenue and information not provided by the applicant. The PAC concludes that the benefits "may be marginal".

You can see the Review report at [Planning Assessment Commission > Home](#)

**Next steps:** The Department of Planning writes a final assessment report in response to the PAC's review. Then the PAC, as Minister for Planning's delegate, determines the project.

### Protect Mugii SCA – Submissions close 18 December

We need to support the NPWS' plan for protecting Mugii SCA. Write to NPWS along the lines of: "I support the draft plan of management for Mugii-Murum-ban SCA that seeks to protect, present and interpret park values in a way that encourages ecologically sustainable visitor use." Add anything extra from your own knowledge of the area if you can. You can submit your comments online through [OEH's website](#).

Alternatively, write to: The Planning Officer, Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area, National Parks and Wildlife Division, 27-31 Inglis St, Mudgee 2850. **Madi Maclean**.



### The Great Koala National Park

Koala numbers have plummeted by a third in just 20 years. That is only three koala generations.

Large and well managed protected areas remain the single most effective tool to conserving biodiversity. The Great Koala National Park, which will form part of a strategic koala reserve plan, is the best chance for koalas to have a secure future in NSW.

This significant new national park would encompass 315,000 ha of public land in the Coffs Harbour region. This biodiversity hotspot includes two nationally recognised koala meta-populations, estimated to contain almost 20% of NSW's remaining wild koalas. The Great Koala National Park would be made up of 175,000 ha of state forests added to 140,000 ha of existing protected areas.

This spectacular landscape hosts lush World Heritage rainforests, some of the world's most diverse towering eucalypt forests, and an array of threatened species, such as the Hastings River Mouse and Spotted-tailed Quoll. The Coffs Harbour – Bellingen Branch of the NPA and the Bellingen Environment Centre has commissioned the design of a koala visitor centre to complement the Great Koala National Park proposal.

Show your support for the Great Koala National Park. Go to <http://www.koalapark.org.au/>

### "Here's another one!" Noel May

My parents had been going on holiday to Jenolan Caves for a week every year for some years and at about 14 years of age I knew the area quite well and noted two men digging a trench to lay a new water pipe down the hill in front of Caves House.

The workers were quite friendly and explained the purpose of the pipe. I was interested in the soil and the organisms in it. After a while, a digger said, "Here's another one".

They both stopped working and bent down to remove "it". A king-size earthworm came slowly out of the trench. I was given the job of taking the worm to a nearby grill for "replanting". I was a very tall boy and the stretched worm went from my upstretched hand to touch the ground (a distance of about 2 metres).

I have read that such worms are only known in Western Australia. The behaviour of the diggers suggests that (around 1960) they were common in damp gullies in the Blue Mountains. **Noel May**.

*Editor's Note: During the past 20 years I have occasionally seen extremely large earthworms in damp places in Blue Mountains valleys after periods of heavy rain. It appeared to me that the worms may have been forced to the surface and drowned by water saturating the soil. Can anybody give us further information? CD*

## Cupidity dictates government's thinking Brian Marshall

The NSW government has recently excelled itself. It has now released documents variously commenting on the 'under-utilisation' of Crown Lands<sup>1</sup>, the 'competitive allocation' of areas suited to coal or CSG exploration<sup>2</sup>, and the facilitation of development through lifting the thresholds of noise impacts and allowing more 'flexibility'<sup>3</sup>. This concerted undermining of environmental, social and agricultural values for the short-term economic benefits of exploiting fossil fuels is rejected.

The government has responded to concerns about the Crown Lands Legislation White Paper. Most submissions supported reducing the confused management of Crown lands, but beyond this, agreement deteriorated depending upon perceived gains and losses. BMCS totally opposed the sale or free-holding of Crown lands, the exclusive use of Crown lands for commercial purposes, and any change which weakens the Crown lands' current level of environmental protection. BMCS believes that government lacks appreciation of the intrinsic value of Crown lands, only seeing them as under-utilized and a potential 'cash cow'. The original White Paper should be revised with appropriate input from those who understand the range of issues, rather than being left to those whose foresight is dominated by dollar signs.

The Strategic Release Framework (SRF) for Coal and Petroleum Exploration aimed to reduce the opportunities and incentives for corruption in the management of NSW coal resources, this being in accordance with a recommendation by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in 2013. It may have achieved this outcome; but ICAC also recommended introduction of "triple bottom line" assessment and in this the SRF fails conspicuously. In focusing on one outcome, the SRF has seemingly weakened protection of NSW's farmland, bushland and water resources. This is largely because the Advisory Body for Strategic Release (ABSR) comprises an Independent Chair plus high-level representatives from the Division of Resources and Energy, Department of Planning and Environment, Treasury, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. It is therefore loaded<sup>4</sup> in favour of exploitation on economic grounds and is, in any case, heavily constrained by being advisory and by its terms of reference<sup>5</sup>.

The dollar-value of the SRF was assured by government proposing (15/10/2015) a supporting amendment to both the *Mining Act* and *Petroleum (Onshore) Act*. It introduces competitive tendering to the allocation of coal and gas exploration tenements. What an incentive scheme! The SRF waves the carrot and the government flogs it to the highest bidder. Somewhat ludicrously (and hopefully unlikely), areas once-covered by Petroleum Exploration Licences for coal seam gas that have been bought-back by government could still be recommended by the ABSR.

Government, having reviewed the Industrial Noise Policy, has circulated the Draft Industrial Noise Guideline (DING) for comment. Disappointingly, the constraints have been weakened. A guideline has less authority than a policy, a background threshold in rural settings has been lifted despite contrary evidence, and there is no serious

consideration of impacts from low frequency sound (including infrasound). From BMCS' viewpoint, the consideration of noise in National Parks is only restricted to areas commonly used by humans; there is negligible consideration of impacts of noise on agricultural livestock and on native fauna in the National Parks and World Heritage Area. Overall, there is more flexibility in terms of classifying some exceedances as 'negligible' and requiring no action, through to accepting an imbalanced negotiated purchase as a form of mitigating significant impacts. BMCS is concerned that weakening of noise constraints will favour coalmines impacting small communities. And, through failing to acknowledge 24/7 impacts on fauna beneath flightpaths, compromise the principal conservation benefits of national parks, wilderness and World Heritage listing.

### The government is open for business, but at what cost?

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.lpma.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/206680/response-to-crown-lands-legislation-white-paper.pdf](http://www.lpma.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/206680/response-to-crown-lands-legislation-white-paper.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/579395/Overarching-Policy-Framework.pdf](http://www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/579395/Overarching-Policy-Framework.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/epa/150185-draft-industrial-noise-guide.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> These Departments variously have a strong to moderately strong commitment to exploiting natural resources for economic dividends.

<sup>5</sup> Term of reference 11 indicates that the ABSR "...will be guided by the Government's published objectives, priorities and desired outcomes in relation to the allocation and development of New South Wales' coal and petroleum resources"



### Beauty under the microscope

As I was examining some botanic specimens, this beautiful little Shield Bug crawled out. I finally got him/her to stand still while I took a photograph down my microscope. This creature is only about 5 mm long.

After some investigation, I have made a partial ID. Order Hemiptera, Family Pentatomidae, or, less likely, Dolycoris. These two families cover several hundred known species. They are sap feeders and use piercing mouthparts to withdraw the liquid from their preferred species of plant. **David Coleby.**

## Australian Wilderness Photography – how it influenced a nation

SATURDAY 19 MARCH, 2016, 10am-12 pm **Cost \$35**

Peter Dombrovskis' mesmerising photo of the Franklin River in Tasmania captured a nation's imagination.

Why did this image have such a profound impact on Australian politics in the 1980s?

Learn about past and contemporary Australian wilderness photographers – such as John Watt Beattie, Olegas Truchanas, Henry Gold, Ian Brown, Nick Moir, Richard Green and Rob Blakers.

Discover how their photography shaped and influenced attitudes to the environment. Tutor: Janine Kitson.

Bookings essential. Contact WEA, SYDNEY Ph: (02) 9264 2781 E: [info@weasydney.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@weasydney.nsw.edu.au)

[www.weasydney.com.au](http://www.weasydney.com.au)



In October Hut News, in an article entitled "The Blue Mountains is teeming with life", Christine Davies discusses the diversity of life in our Blue Mountains bushland and describes coming across an extremely large Huntsman spider during a bushwalk at Woodford.

She finishes with: *"During the previous week there had been hazard reduction burns further along the Oaks Fire Trail towards Glenbrook. On this day, not far away, we could see smoke from a huge hazard reduction burn, south of Bullaburra. I thought about the millions of little animals that we sacrifice in fires to protect our homes. Some species might disappear without our ever knowing they are there."*

It inspired me to write this poem. Paddy Cavanagh.

### The Secret Lives of Unknown Lovers and Mothers

How Little We Know About Spiders

I'm mostly a shy, retiring type;  
with nothing much to say;  
but just right now I want to make a point,  
about OUR life in the Mountains today.

My name is *Delena Cancerides*\*;  
You don't know me very well  
but just listen for a moment  
While my story I to you tell.

I know I often cause you fear,  
though I'm smaller than a mouse ---  
just a harmless *Sparassidae*  
sharing a corner of your car or house.

I see you lose your concentration  
as I dart from dashboard to windscreen;  
and I hear you curse, blame it all on me,  
when you drive into that car YOU should have seen.

You think I'm some deadly tarantula,  
hiding behind the curtains on your wall;  
And you try to stamp all life from me,  
as I scuttle in terror down your hall.

Yet on the off-chance that I bite you,  
of pain or death you need not worry;  
More chance you'll be splattered across the road,  
by a bloody B-double or some other big lorry!!!

So forget your arachnophobia ---  
your silly fear of harmless Spiders;

Not all Nature's Disney-cute and pretty:  
there's more than Koalas and Honey Gliders!!!

You need to get to know me better;  
meet me at home on the forest floor;  
where we gather and live in big family groups,  
--- sometimes of several dozen or more.

And when, like you, I take a mate,  
we court and love with mutual caresses;  
in snug and private places we rendezvous  
under bark or in narrow rock crevices.

My mate is always much smaller than me,  
but with other tricks he works hard and impresses;  
like drumming his palps on the trunks of trees,  
in praise of my hairy legs and silken tresses.

If we hit it off I lay my eggs  
and on silken sheets he performs his duty;  
then together we weave a little sac:  
and all alone I carry off my booty.

I place it under bark or rock,  
and stand guard, foregoing eating;  
for more than 3 weeks I'll stand there;  
Nothing ever makes me think of retreating!

At last I tear and moisten the sac,  
I'm midwife and mother to these eggs;  
and, with a little luck, if all my spiderlings emerge,  
I'm proud Mum of 200 little Daddy Long Legs.

I stay and tend them several weeks,  
for at first they're all small and pale;  
But then off to new homes they all do rush  
like Myers Shoppers at a post-Christmas Sale.

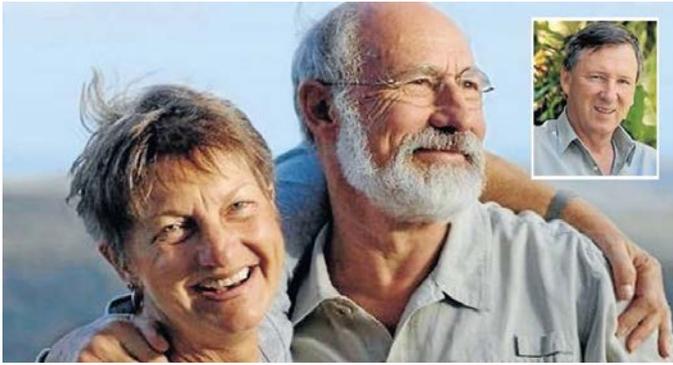
Now I know you'll probably not think of me  
till next in house or car I appear;  
but before I close, can I put to you,  
this concern that's causing me fear:

You see, year after year with your back-burns,  
you claim you're doing hazard reduction;  
but what this means to me, if I be blunt and clear,  
is really nothing more than habitat destruction.

**Paddy Cavanagh.**

\* Note: *Delena Cancerides* is one of more than 90 species of the *Sparassidae* spider --- the spider we commonly refer to as the *Huntsman* spider.

## A great loss to the environmental movement



Landscape photographer Richard Green, his graphic artist wife, Carolyn Green, and documentary film maker John Davis died on 9 November when their helicopter crashed near the Hunter Valley. They were on a trip doing research for a documentary on the environmental impacts of coal mining and had attended the Liverpool Plains Harvest Festival at Breeza. The festival was a protest against the Shenhua coal mine which threatens this rich farmland.

Richard and Carolyn used their helicopter to go to the most remote parts of Australia, including Lake Eyre, the Gulf and the Kimberley, and take amazing world-class photos to show the beauty and diversity of our amazing country. They will be remembered as committed and passionate environmentalists.

Richard Green is a contributor to our Gardens of Stone In Focus Competition. You can see the photos which have been chosen for the exhibition, including Richard's, at <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/gardens-stone-focus-photographic-competition-gallery> and more of Richard's photography at [www.richardgreen.net.au/news](http://www.richardgreen.net.au/news) and his photo blog [www.picturetrail.com/rq](http://www.picturetrail.com/rq)

Photo: Carolyn and Richard Green - from Richard Green Photography and (inset) John Davis—published in Sydney Morning Herald.

## Poets' Corner

### Scribbly Gums

satin smooth  
silky sheen  
grey trunks distorted  
by strong winds  
stand silent  
shielding secret visitors

spring bark splits  
revealing tracks,  
zigzag adornment  
loop, squiggle,  
surprising patterns  
on show in stands  
of twisted trees

### Lois Holland

*Readers of Hut News are invited to send a poem inspired by the Blue Mountains, maximum of 20 lines. Each month, one or two will be published in Poets' Corner. Poems can be emailed to [brendan049@gmail.com](mailto:brendan049@gmail.com) or even posted to Poets' Corner at 5 Lurline Street, Wentworth Falls 2782. Brendan Doyle.*

### Welcome to new members

Geoff Walker, Katoomba  
Bette Mifsud, Katoomba  
Kathleen Sneddon, Valley Heights  
Carl Moll, Glenbrook  
Helen Cavanagh, Blaxland

### Good news for two little possums

Photographed are two three-month old Ringtail Possums found in Blackheath lying separately looking lifeless, but breathing. Had they fallen from their Mother's back during a fight with another possum or flight from a predator: I wonder if anyone knows or has made a similar find?

The little possums were taken to the local vet who checked them over and declared them ready for a WIRES carer who picked them up that afternoon. The vet nurse said they would eventually be released with a group of others around the same age.

Thanks to all the great WIRES volunteers and to the local vets. Yet, we still lament the loss of our dearly departed friend and long-time WIRES carer Gillian Janus, who died over four years ago (9/10/11). She served the communities in Blaxland and Blackheath in total for 20 years and no creature was turned away. Though she specialised in birds she also dealt with possums, little kangaroos, and even holding the odd blue tongue lizards until the WIRES specialist arrived. Maureen Grant.



Juvenile Ringtail Possums, photographed at Blackheath by their anonymous rescuer.

## Two Months in a Bushcare Officer's Life: Spring 2015 (October/November) Paul Vale

**Bushcare Work:** This is a massively-busy period for me as it is for others. Bush and garden requires intensive weeding! And other foliage needs attention for bushfire mitigation. In the space available in Hut News, it is not possible to go into great detail about the work undertaken by volunteers or to list all the bushcare sites.

**The Great Grose Weed Walk** program continues to reap rewards, not only with reduction in weeds in the more remote areas, but also opportunities to go places where others do not (usually) have the opportunity. In late October it was a relatively short walk into the beginning of the Grose River and associated swamp below Mt Victoria Cemetery and then a day working our way downstream searching for riparian weeds. Some are treated immediately, others mapped for later action. Climbing out at the end of the day, the view was stunning.

At **Popes Glen (Blackheath)** we are using some of the funds from an Environmental Trust grant for removal of the remaining Radiata Pine trees from the site. Careful management of the grant by Council has enabled us to use surplus funds to weed upstream in the Memorial Park. We also had another wonderful GGWW day weed-walking Popes Glen Creek in October, when a Yellow-bellied Water Skink visited us. This is a twice-yearly event, co-sponsored by NPWS and BMCC.

On 31 October we attacked a large forest of mature holly trees in the creek below **Frogs Hollow (Blackheath)**, along with some Radiata Pines and Cherry Laurels.

**The Gully (Katoomba):** Sadly, we were told of the death of Garguree Elder Aunty Mary King in late October, with her funeral in Katoomba on 29th. We used the planned combined area Bushcare Group planting day on 1st November as a tribute to her. 400 plants put in at Upper Kedumba site in less than 2 hours. Not a bad effort.

**Swampcare Workdays (Hazelbrook to Mt Victoria):** Similar to the Great Grose Weed Walk events, Council runs a series of specialised volunteer workdays to help rehabilitate our shrinking swamp reserves. **Kittyhawk at Wentworth Falls** is one of my regular venues, which is a joint NPWS/BMCC event. **Valley View swamp in Blackheath** is another. This is an interesting swamp, in the stormwater flow-line between the Great Western Highway and Blackheath Golf Course. The swamp feeds the dams for the course. There are large Holly, Cherry and Portuguese Laurel trees, giant Cotoneaster plants



Weeding on Popes Glen Creek

and masses of both Star Jasmine and Japanese Honey-suckle smothering the natives. Always a fulfilling day with obvious evidence of where we have been working.

**Blue Mountains Bushcare Network:** The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment (Western Sydney University) has recently begun the PEAS project, monitoring flowering and seeding times for pea species. I attended a talk arranged by Council's Bushcare Team last week, where Dr Paul Rymer who lectures in Plant Ecological genetics talked about his research exploring local adaptation from field to glasshouse and genetics lab. Then discussed current work looking at plant phenology and the opportunities for citizen scientists. So what is PEAS? It's the Pea Ecology Adaptation Survey - of course! Volunteers are encouraged to be part of this project.

**Greater Sydney Local Land Services Area:** The Greater Sydney Landcare Network is currently applying for funding to employ a co-ordinator to do the day-to-day running of the group. The Governance subcommittee (includes me) is in full swing after the AGM getting our policies and procedures, risk management and other necessary protocols fine-tuned prior to releasing more activities to the membership. A busy period which hopefully will result in benefits for "The Bush" and environmental matters generally in the Greater Sydney LLS Area.

There is always more than enough work to go around in the Society, and the bushcare officer's work doesn't stop at bushcare. I helped with the setting up for the Mick Dark Talk and looked after the technical necessities for the Society's bird event. I attended the NCC Annual Conference and AGM on behalf of the Society. My work with Land Use Subcommittee on the LEP campaign continues.

Most of my "spare" time in late October and November has been spent helping Ross Coster with the No Western Sydney Airport campaign. More than 200Mbs of files to download and only 60 days to prepare the submission. But great progress being made with a motivated team under Ross's leadership.

Just a small snapshot out of the huge practical effort put in by both Council and volunteers in the Blue Mountains to conserve our beautiful environment. **Paul Vale.**



Valley of the Waters Bushcare is the Society's volunteer group.

## What we learn from the Bunburang Maroodang exhibition Don Morison

This exhibition reflects more than two years work by those honouring the Gundungurra legacy in the southern Blue Mountains. While the Southern Blue Mountains may have been sporadically visited until about 5000 years ago, at that time refinements in hunting technology and the acquisition of the skill of making possum skin cloaks from bone needles ushered in continuous settlement by the Gundungurra until Europeans arrived.

Those who contributed to the exhibition participated in walking, photography and re-enactment activities in the area between the Megalong Valley and Glenbrook.

While the exhibition at the Heritage Centre, Blackheath, was due to finish on 28 November, it is to be hoped that other venues will be found for ongoing display of the various elements brought together to make up the exhibition.

Photographers represented included Michael Jackson, Yvonne Kaiser-Glass, Jacqueline Reid, Bryden Williams and Wyn Jones. A number of interesting physical objects were gathered together. A replica of a dugout canoe was created and successfully paddled on the Kedumba River near the old Kedumba farm. An object represented a "carved tree" with various components including timber taken from trees at several different campsites which were used during an east-west traverse of the exhibition's subject area. There were replica clapping sticks, wood carvings and so on.

This project helps members of the Conservation Society to reflect that our area of interest intersects with several indigenous traditions including the Gundungurra, Dharug, Wiradjuri, and Dharawal. Each of them have their own perspectives on what should be remembered about how they related to the Greater Blue Mountains.

It is particularly timely that the work towards this exhibition focussed on the Kedumba River catchment, Korowal (Mount Solitary), Kings Tableland and the Blue Labyrinth. These areas could be negatively affected by potential developments in the flight path debate about the proposed Western Sydney airport. Blue Mountains Conservation Society does not want any airport causing increased overflights of any of the natural or urban areas in the Greater Blue Mountains. The Bunburang Maroodang exhibition reminds us how important quiet, peaceful reflection and presence is to the heirs of the Gundungarra tradition and all of us who sense our affinity with them, even in the natural areas closest to the populated parts of the mountains.



An Eastern Water Dragon at Old Ford Reserve, Megalong, which was the starting point for a major excursion by the creators of the Bunburang Maroodang exhibition.

Photo by John Turner

### You can become a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society

- **Post** this Application Form with your cheque or money order to: Blue Mountains Conservation Society, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, **OR**
- **Join online** at: [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

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

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

Phone(s) .....

Email .....

**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. ....

**MEMBERSHIP FEES** (please circle one item)

Single \$30 Concession (Senior/Student) \$20

Household \$35 Household Concession \$25

Corporate (negotiable)

Membership (circled above) \$ .....

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

Bushwalkers: please add

\$20 per walker per annum. \$ .....

**TOTAL AMOUNT** \$ .....

Send my copy of Hut News by

Please tick box  mail  internet only

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; Website and social media; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Administration;

**ENQUIRIES:** Phone 02 4757 1872

Email: [membership@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:membership@bluemountains.org.au)

### A BEQUEST: Please remember us in your Will.

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording: "I bequeath the sum of \$ ... to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the treasurer for the time being of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society".

## 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.

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

## VALLEY OF THE WATERS 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 sunhat.

New members are welcome.  
Phone Karen 4757 1929.

## On the Waterfall Way (October 2015) Christine Davies

The Thursday Interpretive Bushwalkers met at Wollomombi Gorge in Oxley Wild Rivers National Park for a trip along the Waterfall Way. Wollomombi Gorge is spectacular, a broad deep canyon with sheer walls of flaky slate and tall waterfalls flowing after rain.

We stayed at Ebor Falls Hotel/Motel for three nights, a short walk from Ebor Falls in Guy Fawkes National Park, with day trips to Cathedral Rock National Park and Point Lookout in New England National Park.

It was a delightful walk among the wildflowers and granite boulders at Cathedral Rock NP, with a climb for some to the top of Cathedral Rock.



At an altitude of 1,564 metres, Point Lookout is the second highest peak in the region. Trees are festooned with foliose lichen and other epiphytes and there are stands of Antarctic Beech. The heavy mist which obscured the views added atmosphere to the rainforest walk.

Leaving Ebor, our first stop was at Dangar Falls in Dorrigo National Park. There is a walk to the base of the falls with a good boardwalk. Lunch at the Rainforest Centre café was followed by a walk in the mist on the treetop boardwalk where there were numerous birds and little spider webs sparkled with drops of moisture.



At the Dorrigo Steam Railway and Museum (not open to the public) we stopped to look at the steam engines and other rolling stock which were visible from the road. Keith Jones, who was involved in starting the collection, came to talk to us and, although he had only a few minutes to spare, managed to squeeze in an hour-long tour and talk before we said we had to go.

After a drive through dense rainforest, dark with trees very close together, we came to the Never Never Picnic Area. What a beautiful, peaceful place! Never Never is the hub of a

wonderful walking track network, but on this day we simply meditated on the diverse vegetation around the picnic area.

We stopped at Newell Falls, then through Bellingen and overnight at Urunga. An early morning walk on the Urunga Boardwalk, with its excellent interpretive signs and lovely views of the river and mountains, finished this trip on the Waterfall Way. There is much more to see in this area.

Photos: Everlasting Daisies, Cathedral Rock (Corinne Gaston); Never Never Picnic Area—large Hoop Pine, Bob Reyswoud standing on far right; Old Man Eastern Grey Kangaroo guards a bridge at Urunga (Christine Davies)



## A BLUE TRAIL: Natural and cultural experiences in the western Blue Mountains Don Morison.

### 10. Budthingaroo – the Society's donation, Central Boyd Plateau

The mid 1970's was a pivotal era for the beautiful Boyd Plateau, now part of the Kanangra-Boyd Wilderness Area. A proposal emerged for a 2000 hectare pine plantation which would have destroyed the last sub-alpine forest in Central NSW (source: Colong Foundation website). After a public campaign, investigations by the State Pollution Control Commission, with input from the Colong Foundation, led to the sparing of the native forest in 1975.

In 1994, as the National Parks and Wildlife Service sought to buy out agricultural inholdings on the Plateau, the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society, a predecessor to Blue Mountains Conservation Society, made a major financial contribution.

Today the integration of the Budthingaroo pastoral lands into the surrounding forest is gradually continuing. Lichen encrusts the small plaque about 300 metres from the Kanangra Walls Road which acknowledges the Society's donation. Red Grevillea plants and many other natives dot the remaining pastures.

On a recent visit, Society members disturbed mobs of Eastern Grey Kangaroos, observed migrating white butterflies, and trod carefully around a newly dug wombat burrow. It was a time to feel truly grateful to the past activists from Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society and the Colong Foundation as well as the officers from National Parks and other state government bodies who envisaged an intact wilderness surviving for generations on the plateau.



Photos: A wombat lives where the forest is reinvading the pasture.

The Red Grevilleas are popular with both birds and pollinating insects, in the old inholding.

The Society's 1994 contribution recorded in stone:

"Development in this portion of land within the Park was averted with the assistance of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society. Returning the land to its natural condition satisfies one of the Society's long held goals.

*Tread softly for we are but passers by."*

This "Blue Trail" is a collective description for sites in the western Blue Mountains that arouse natural or cultural interest or both. Most are only a short walk from roads or vehicular tracks. One day, a high quality walking path may link them.

**BLUE MOUNTAINS  
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**  
[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

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

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:** Walks 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, [denfenella@optusnet.com.au](mailto:denfenella@optusnet.com.au)

Dec 10 **Christmas party at Lindsay's house.** Contact Lindsay on 4751 6640 for details.

Dec 17 **Walls Cave, Blackheath.** Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

No walks December 24<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>.

Jan 7 **Gordon Falls, Leura.** Meet cnr The Mall and Megalong Street Leura 9.30am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Jan 14 **South Lawson waterfalls, Lawson.** Meet Honour Ave near highway 8.45 am. Leader Keith 4736 1010. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Jan 21 **Birdwood Gully, Springwood.** Meet Springwood Station car park 9.00am. Leader Amanda 4751 5061. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Jan 28 **Nature Trail, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Car Park 9.30am. Leader Maurice 0402 402 783. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Feb 4 **Deanei Reserve, Springwood.** Meet Civic Centre 9.00am. Leader Maurice 0402 402 783. Grade 1

Feb 11 **Lyrebirds Dell, Leura.** Meet cnr The Mall and Megalong Street 9.30am. Leader Chris 4721 4309. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc: 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, mobile 04024 02783, 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. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. If you are a new walker to Saturday walks, before attending contact the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy—phone 4758 6009, email [jp34@tpg.com.au](mailto:jp34@tpg.com.au) Check [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) for updates.

**Saturday Walks driver reimbursement:** *In an effort to ensure that car drivers are adequately compensated for the use of their vehicles a driver reimbursement policy applies* (Check [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) Saturday Walks page for details)

- Dec 12 **Echo Point to Furbers Steps** via Prince Henry Cliff Walk, down Furbers Steps then along **Federal Pass to Leura Forest** and up to Solitary Restaurant. Opportunity to see the newly reconstructed track to the Three Sisters. 550 metres descent/ascents. Leader **Warren** 4787 5403 - Meet at Katoomba Railway Station Carpark- 8.00am-10Km – Grade 3. Map **Katoomba**.
- Dec 19 **Christmas Lunch at Wentworth Falls Country Club.** It is a traditional Buffet, \$41.00 per person. Leader **Bob** 4757 2694 -Meet at The Club at 12N for 12,30 start. Deposit please.
- Dec 19 **Christmas Lunch at Wentworth Falls Country Club.** It is a traditional Buffet, \$41.00 per person. Leader **Bob** 4757 2694. Meet at The Club at 12N for 12,30 start. Deposit please.
- Dec 26 **No walk programmed**
- Jan 2 **No Walk programmed.** If you would like to recover from Christmas/New Year excesses turn up and decide on a walk on the day. Leader - **Decide on the day.** Meet at Katoomba Station Carpark 8.30am. Map **Katoomba**.
- Jan 9 **River Caves** – ideal warm weather walk with spectacular lighting affects around midday. Leader **Bob** 4757 2694. Meet at Wentworth Falls Stockade Cpark-7.30am. 6Km. Gr3. Map **Rock Hill**
- Jan 16 **Dalpura Canyon or Jinki Creek.** Decision on the day, weather dependent. Both are spectacular gullies north of the Grose. Compulsory waist deep wade to the Eddie on fire chamber. Bring thermals and/or change of clothing and wet shoes. Leader **Jim** 4758 6009. Meet at Mt Vic Station 8.00am. 6Km. Gr 3/4. Map **Mt Wilson**
- Jan 23 **Mt York Historic Tracks** - Lockyers Road and Coxs Road. Leader **Eddie** 4784 2691. Meet at Mt Vic Station Carpark 8.30am. 9Km. Gr 3. Map **Mount Wilson/Hartley**
- Jan 30 More of **Warren's Wollangambe Wanderings.** Leader **Warren** 4787 5403. Meet at Blackheath Station Carpark- 8.00am. 12Km. Gr3. Map **Wollangambe**
- Feb 6 **Dumbano Tunnels** - New walk in the wilds of the Wollemi. Leader **Harold** 0409010737. Meet at Blackheath Station Carpark 8.00am. 6Km. Gr3. Map **Wollangambe**
- Feb 13 **Red Hand Cave and Crayfish Pool** - return via Camp Fire Creek. Total ascent 400m spread over several small ascents. Swimming opportunities. Leader **Bart** 4739 9947. Meet at Glenbrook Station Carpark 8.00am. 13Km. Gr3. Map **Penrith**

**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 Keith Dorrian, 4736 1010, [keithdor53@hotmail.com](mailto:keithdor53@hotmail.com)

- Dec 14 **Christmas Party, Glenbrook Bowling Club,** 3 course meal \$35. Book and pay Maurice by 30 November – “Entertainment”. Meet Glenbrook Bowling Club 12.30 pm. Maurice 4739 4942 (M) 04024 02783.
- Dec 21 **Bus trip to Minnamurra Falls.** Board and pavement walk to Falls. About 5km return. Fairly steep climb into fall. Bus fare \$12, book and pay Tony 9625 3985. Extra \$4.40 entrance fee to National Park unless holder of National Parks Pass. Meet Springwood car park, behind Westpac, 7.50 am. Maurice 4739 4942 (M) 0402 402 783. Grade 2/3.
- Dec 28 **South Lawson Waterfalls.** Meet Cnr Honour Avenue and Highway, Lawson, 8.35 am. Keith 0411 162 345. Grade 2.
- Jan 4 North Lawson Park. Short walk to Echo Bluff, St Michaels Falls and Fairy Falls. Meet Lawson Bowling Club car park 8.35 am. Keith 0411 162 345. Grade 2.
- Jan 11 **Rigby Hill & Walls LO,** Bells Line of Road. Spectacular Grose Valley views. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50 am. Car pool fare \$5. Maurice 4739 4942 (M) 0402 402 783. Grade 2.
- Jan 18 No walk scheduled at Hut News deadline. Check website.
- Jan 25 **Furber steps to Landslide and return,** Katoomba. Along the Federal Pass. Meet Katoomba Train Station, North side car park, 8.30 am. Car pool. Keith 0411 162 345. Grade 3.
- Feb 1 **Dargan Arch and surrounds.** Don't miss the opportunity to see this spectacular natural feature. 8 km. Meet Mount Victoria train station 8.50 am. Car pool fare \$5. Warren 4787 5403. Grade 3.
- Feb 8 **Breakfast Creek, Megalong Valley.** Bring swimmers. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 8.40 am. Car pool fare \$5. Liz Stark 4754 4966. Grade 3.
- Feb 15 **Minnehaha Falls,** Katoomba. Bring swimmers for possible swim in waterfall pool. Meet Katoomba Station carpark 8.25 am. Car pool. Ros 4733 3880. Grade 2/3.

Read about our bushwalkers' exploits on Facebook—  
with lots of wonderful photos.

<https://www.facebook.com/BmcsBushwalking>  
<https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks>

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS**  
Program on page 11.

### 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))  
or write to BMCS, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782  
with your cheque or money order.