



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"

September Meetings

At a special general meeting which preceded the general meeting, changes to our constitution were approved by a three quarters majority of those present.

During the general meeting BMCS President Colin Williams presented a cheque for \$380 to Carla Billingham for the purchase of a Streamwatch Kit for use by primary school children.

Guest speaker Joyce Moffitt of the Bathurst Conservation Society spoke about Mount Airlie, the Newnes Plateau, and the endangered Copper Butterfly, *Paralucia spinifera*. It was a very interesting talk on matters which should be given priority by our Society and which brought home to members that BMCS needs to develop strong ties with the Bathurst Conservation Society so that we can share knowledge and research and present a united front on issues which affect both organisations.

October General Meeting

Discovering the Blue Mountains

On Friday 25 October at the Conservation Hut, Jim Smith will talk about some of his remarkable encounters with wildlife, wise people and places over the last 30 years. He will discuss how to read the history of the Blue Mountains landscape and how to connect with the flow of history that defines a place. He will show how his philosophy of the environment has developed and how it differs from that of other environmental activists. He hopes that people attending the talk will come away with an enhanced appreciation of the Blue Mountains and its walking tracks.

The meeting starts at 7.30 pm. Visitors are welcome.

Forest Decision

CONGRATULATIONS to organisers of the Forest Countdown campaign, to members who wrote letters in support of the campaign, and to the State Government.

"10 new national parks have been declared, 12 new wilderness areas have been protected. Also the timber industry has been given renewal 5-year resource contracts. The Premier said in announcing the Government's interim forests and wilderness package that NSW would now have the best national park system in the world, and the resource security contracts would ensure the timber industry's long term viability and attract much needed investment."

(From Sydney Morning Herald, 24/9/96)

Nature Track Bushcare Group

Spring is here — a perfect time to start BMCS's new bushcare group.

We have had a long association with the Nature Track. In 1963, Isobel Bowden wrote a leaflet for the track, which won an award for Environmental Education. It was one of the first of its kind, providing information for marked points along the track. The (then) UBMCS distributed the leaflet from The Hut.

The bushcare group will be working along the section of track behind the Valley Road houses, tackling Broom, *Erica*, blackberry, honeysuckle, monbretia and Coreopsis.

Our first working day will be:

MONDAY, 21 OCTOBER

9 am to 12 noon

meeting at The Hut, Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls.

It's a great way to meet other Society members, while helping the bush. Please let me know if you would like to come so I can organise tools. — Jessica (57.2783).

Weed of the Month

Erica lusitanica (Spanish Heath)

Don't be tricked into thinking this one is a native. With its shrubby growth and dainty, white bell-shaped flowers it often is mistaken for one.

Erica grows to about one metre, has soft, emerald green foliage, and hundreds of flowers **flowering now!!**

So NOW is the time to dig it up before the seed is set. The roots are very brittle so carefully dig them all out.

In place if *Erica* you could plant a similar sized native, e.g. *Grevillea phyllicoides* or *Isopogon anemonifolius*.

Who needs to grow a weed!!!

Would one of our weed enthusiasts like to take over this column? Help will be available. Contact Jessica on



57.2783.

Biological Diversity

The State Government's Draft Biological Diversity Strategy is expected to lay out a plan for Government and Community co-operation to protect and conserve biodiversity in NSW. It has been

prepared by NPWS and NSW Biological Diversity Advisory Council.

This will be an important document touching on many environmental issues.

The Nature Conservation Council is requesting that submissions be sent in to assist with changes to the draft. The draft will be open for comment until November 4 and should be available from NPWS office.

Anyone interested in helping to prepare a BMCS submission would be greatly appreciated. Contact Jessica (57-2783).

Nursery News

New equipment has recently been installed in the BMCS nursery at Blackheath and is working well.

The major items were three fibreglass trays, each 6 feet by 3 feet, for use in the greenhouse. Each

\$880 tray has a thermostatically controlled heating element, to regulate root temperatures accurately up to 40 degrees Celsius. These trays will enable us to extend our seasons for seed-growing and cutting-propagation by several months.

We spent \$125 on replacing glass panels in the greenhouse, \$145 on repairs to the heater-blower, \$230 on some essential plumbing, \$150 on a new greenhouse sprinkler system, \$275 on a moisture sensor and sprinkler control, and about \$400 on a variety of hardware to make it all work. And we spent \$320 on 40 concrete slabs to improve safety in the shadehouse.

We also bought a whole range of pots and trays to determine which would be best for our operations, to speed up production, and to provide our customers with products that are easy to handle.

Our aim is to double our turnover this year, and each year for the next three years. We believe this would be possible if we get the space . . .

We still need volunteers to help in this work, especially those who can make a regular commitment to attend. When? 9-12 every Tuesday morning. Phone David Coleby (84-1395) for details.



"Hut News", the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782.
President: Colin Williams 84-1899
Secretary: Les Coyne 57-3327
Editor: Christine Davies 87-7246
Deadline for October issue is Oct. 22

Land Use Report

EMP2:

As you read this, a public meeting should have been announced by several environment groups to express concern about slow progress on EMP2. EMP2 is the most important strategic planning document in Blue Mountains recent history.



In spite of this, the Council elected in September 1995 has shown almost no interest in advancing it to public exhibition stage. A discussion and resolution at the BMCC meeting on 24/9/96 did nothing to advance matters.

Councillors who campaigned for office on creating a balance between development and the environment have been prepared to progress large subdivision applications while giving no support to EMP2.

These Councillors are evidently prepared to let years of valuable research by Council staff go to waste.

Voluntary Landcare by Unemployed:

In September 1996 the Federal Government made an important decision. It concerns unemployed people who are prepared to do voluntary landcare work for more than 16 hours per week. It releases some of them from work test requirements.

Information so far suggests that those over 50 are affected immediately, and all persons who have been unemployed for more than 12 months by October 1997 will be eligible for the exemption.

The new guidelines will be administered by the CES, and various landcare organisations will be approved to participate.

Anti-Airport Candidacy:

Independent Kate Valla will contest the October 19 Lindsay by-election to oppose Badgery's Creek airport. Lindsay covers Penrith and parts of the lower Mountains.

— Don Morison.

The Honeyeaters

How exciting! How wonderful! Oh, to be a poet! In September I watched the southern migration of thousands of little honeyeaters whose flight path is directly over my house in Blackheath.

In winter in the Blue Mountains three species of Banksia flower to provide a feast of nectar for these little travellers. They arrive when the first chill hits the mountain air, in little groups of 6-10, coming across the valley, rising above the cliffs. Some of them stay here over winter to breed, while some go further north.

Now they are returning south, flying in groups of 12-20 and chirping as they fly from treetop to treetop in an ever southerly direction. Where are they going? Where have they been? I phoned the expert, and the poet, Graham Alcorn.

Graham tells me that we haven't found out where they go, but their distribution is from Adelaide to Cairns. During

migration they fly above the trees where they are safe from predators, from one tree to another, and don't like open spaces. They call during flight so that none of them get lost. (All migrating birds call during flight.)

More is known about the Silvereyes. Tasmanian Silvereyes (which can be identified with a rufous flank) migrate to Sydney, while Sydney Silvereyes (with grey flanks) migrate to Cairns!! —

Christine Davies.

Intelife — Volunteers Day

On October 26, 9.30 am. Volunteers are invited to come along to help mulch a large area beside the newly tarred access road and plant native plants grown from seed collected and propagated by trainees on site. Enquiries to Carla 57-2451.

Threatened Species

Regent Honeyeater surveys in the Capertee Valley October 12-13, November 23-24, December 14-15. Volunteers needed. Contact Jane Miller 39.1190.

Paralucia spinifera, Bathurst-Yetholme Copper Butterfly — our most endangered and rarest butterfly, with a wingspan of just 20-30 mm. It relies on the Blackthorn scrub, Bursaria spinosa, and also an attendant ant, Anonychomyrma itinerans, and cannot survive without them.

Eggs are laid on the underside of leaves on the lower trunk of the Blackthorn. The larvae have ant-attracting organs — one ant stays with each larva and guides it to food and back to the base of the trunk.

Habitat sites are few in number and similar in geography and floristic structure, on the edge of open Eucalypt woodlands usually on sheltered west to north-west aspects that allow enough sunlight for the butterfly to lay her eggs on the preferred sunny Blackthorn shrubs.

Threats to the butterfly's habitat are grazing cattle, sheep, goats and feral pigs, clearing for pine plantations, regular burning and weed infestation, and another threat is the over-collection of the species.

BMCS has sent a submission to NPWS supporting the proposal to list Paralucia spinifera as an endangered species on Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Threatened Species Conservation Act.

Caring for Wildlife

Juvenile Magpies feeding with their parents on the road are not yet aware that cars can hurt them. Slow down or stop and give them time to learn the road rules.

Springtime is a busy time of year for Blue Mountains WIRES (Wildlife Information Rescue and Information Service), with baby birds and slow snakes adding to the year-round assortment of native birds and animals attacked by cats and dogs, hit by motor vehicles, stuck in chimneys, etc., etc.

The WIRES rescue number is 54-2946.

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Grand Walk—Grand Canyon

18 of us set out on a fine spring morning for a walk that has it all. The descent from Evan's Lookout past a bejewelled pink Hakea silicifolia below the ridgetop gums on a 90 year old track led us into rainforest beside a babbling brook. Accompanied by calls of the whipbird and pardelote we made our way through lichened trees and steps, espying a pair of rosellas and the first blooming Waratah of the season.

At Beauchamp Falls we clambered over rocks for a view of the creek, now tumbling 15 metres down, and a splendid slice of geological history displayed in the cliff alongside. Clearly visible were layers of slate, sandstone, shale, ironstone, coal, and chert — a lovely spot to contemplate the vast natural forces that have created and shaped the Blue Mountains over eons longer than our mortal spans. But we had more to explore so on we moved, back to the creek junction and along the Grand Canyon past cool languid pools wreathed in ferns and coachwoods camouflaged with pink lichens.

After lunch in a patch of sunlight filtered through the narrow chasm into "The Slot" we gradually climbed beside and above the Grand Canyon to the sound of flowing water, with the rocks walls rising from the depths and hanging gardens precariously perched on their flanks. We spotted a lyrebird scratching under a tree trunk and an eastern water dragon basking in the sun high above the creek. Spring flowers along this part of the walk were effusive — many fragrant, a few pungent and some like Sprengelia monticola decorating the rocks which are its mountain habitat.

After stopping on a sandy beach for the photographer among us to catch up, some climbed up the stairs while others followed the old track along the creekbed. Then we climbed up through Neates Glen to the top — each at our own pace, arriving a little puffed with exclamations of relief, delight and satisfaction. Looking back all declared it had been a grand day on one of the Mountain's top walks.—Barbie Wylie.

Welcome to New Members

Eric Dunkley, Wentworth Falls
Helen Kerrison, Lawson
Michael Cooper, Blackheath
Carolyn O'Neill, Wentworth Falls
Dave & Trish Murphy (Summit Gear), Katoomba

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

Garden Inspection

Rachel Makinson invites members to join members of the Society for Growing Australian Native Plants at her Mount Victoria home on Sunday 20 October for morning tea and to inspect her native garden. (See Dates for Your Diary, page 4.) Rachel's beautiful native garden is well-known to many members and includes a few rare and endangered plants, e.g. *Boronia filifolia*.

Members of SGAP will then go to Leura to inspect Allerton, garden of Mary Moodie (of Gardening Australia fame), and have a late picnic lunch at Gordon Falls Reserve. Members are welcome to join them. (*SGAP's Glenbrook Reserve, on the Highway opposite visitors' centre, is open for sales and advice on growing lower mountain native plants from 12 to 4 pm Weekends and Wednesdays.*)

The Newnes Plateau

The Newnes Plateau is a beautiful and unique area being damaged by forestry, sand mining, coal mining, bush rock thieves, and others who do not appreciate its beauty and fragility. It needs protection.

Many of us had the privilege to walk in some of the special hidden places on the Newnes Plateau under the leadership of John and Olive Noble. These were walks indelibly marked on the diary ... not to be missed!!! Don Morison's poem speaks for us all.

Walking with Olive and John

Out in the vast northern mountains
In tangles of canyons and creeks
A man and a woman stride unafraid
As the walking group straggles and gapes
The Nobles are taking a walk today
Are you ready, all set for a lift
Will your mind soon be riding a lonely trail
Till we park in a clearing and hike
Their gardens of stone ... and moss ... and dreams

Their gardens are open today
The Nobles are eager to show us around
A secret corner shared
A stroll on a property heals the soul
With the gardeners at your side
When their simple joy in the soil's green fruits
Makes each step light and calm
And these are the plateau's gardeners
The wardens of the wild
Where the stone pagodas tower and flake
In swirls of mist and wind
The Nobles guard an ancient land
Where the Wolgan River snakes
Young are the Eastern temples
Whose name the pagodas share
And when the canyon country's voice
Has lured us to return
We'll clamber along the shady beds
And thrill to the bushland's songs
And we'll imagine that Olive and John
Are walking just ahead
Familiar guides in the wilderness
The plateau walkers' friends

Donald J. Morison

Looking Back ... (The Katoomba Daily, Saturday, January 14, 1922.)

Trout—Fine Asset Not Exploited

It is not widely known that Rainbow Trout exist in Minna-ha-ha Creek. A few local enthusiasts whip the stream each week, and usually bring home a nice basket of fair-sized beauties to reward their labours.

Disciples of delightful old Isaac Walton make long and expensive pilgrimages in search of finny spoil; yet we permit the existence of a fine trout stream at our door to go unadvertised.

Arrangements could be made with the Fisheries Department to replenish the stream with fry at regular intervals, thus insuring against depletion when many rods are at work. The council could also enforce regulations regarding the means employed to take the fish.

We have a fine asset in this sport, deserving of both earnest fostering, and judicious advertising. No other place but Katoomba would have hidden its light under a bushel so long. An advertisement in the fishing columns of leading sporting papers would bring a handsome return to the town.

(In 1921-22 "tourism" was all the go, including the promotion of winter tourism on the Mountains. —Reg Baumgarten).

In the Bush

No sooner was Bunyip back in his home billabong than another opportunity arose to wander in the great outdoors. A group from the local art society had five days away on a painting trip up the back of the Hunter River. A different world, a different light and a different economy. Wonderful accommodation—\$10 a night. Maybe some Society members would be interested?

Over a hundred years of grazing have seen the valley floors cleared of forest and it now only clings to the steepest slopes where only the hungriest of cows would venture. The creeks or brooks as they are

called up that way are said to contain the purest of water, as they have originated around the flanks of Barrington Tops. Judging from the pastures the area badly needs rain.

We met two employees from the Water Conservation Commission who foresee legislation eventually coming through to fence stock away from all the creeks and so allow natural regeneration of timber cover along the banks. The row over gun controls would be just a mild stir compared to what would follow this proposition.

It's strange how the environmental scientists see all the problems and can offer solutions which any thinking person would agree with, yet vested interests and power politics can delay the implementation for years.

September! An exciting month — the month of the Equinox — equal hours of day and night, though by the time you read this the daylight hours will be obviously longer than those of the night. The average daily temperature slowly continues to rise and all life forms become more active. Reproduction

becomes a preoccupation as this is the time which gives promise of ample food supplies for the newborn.

And all this arrangement comes about because the earth rotates around the sun on an axis 23½° from the vertical. Hence the direct rays of the sun shine in the course of a year on the latitudes between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Just now the rays are a little south of the equator and by December 22 the maximum tilt will place Rockhampton directly under these rays.

Pardon this slightly pedantic lapse but the way evolution has responded to this physical arrangement never ceases to fill me with awe and wonderment.

More next month on how the local flora and fauna have reacted and what Bunyip saw in the Flinders Ranges.

—The Bunyip.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

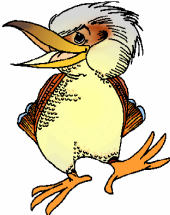
Walks have been graded: 1-3 easy, 4-7 medium, 8-10 harder.
If in doubt contact the leader. **Walkers must carry 1 litre of water.**

OCTOBER

- 06 (Sun) **Bushwalk—Ruined Castle.** Meet outside Gearins Hotel, Katoomba, at 9.30. Duration 6 hours. Grade 8. Contact Chris Woods 82.3419. (Steep descent and ascent of Golden Stairs).
- 14 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—The Walls Lookout.** Meet at Mount Victoria Station at 9.30. Contact Norah Gaynor 87.6071.
- 16 (Wed) **Historical Walk—Woodford to Linden.** Meet at Woodford Station (south side) at 10 am. Contact Alan Macauley 39.2767. Grade 4.
- 19 (Sat) **Bushwalk—National Pass.** Meet at The Hut at 10 am. Duration 4 hours. Grade 5-6. Contact Jill Dark 58.7061.
- 20 (Sun) **Garden Inspection and Morning Tea.** Join members of SGAP at the home of Rachel Makinson. Meet 10 am at Sunset Rock carpark, end of Grandview Road, Mount Victoria. Contact Rachel Makinson 87-1302. (Phone Christine Davies 87-7246 if you require transport from Mount Victoria Station).
- 21 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group — 9 am to 12 noon.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am. (See Page 1.) Contact Jessica Yuille on 57.2783 so that she can organise tools.
- 21 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—The Hanging Garden.** Meet at Wentworth Falls Station Carpark (nearest Highway) at 9.30. Contact Christine Davies 87.7246.
- 22 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 25 (Fri) **General Meeting** at The Hut at 7.30. **Guest speaker Jim Smith — Discovering the Blue Mountains.**
- 28 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Echo Point (Lawson).** Meet at Lawson Bowling Club, North Lawson, at 9.30. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509. **Note: All walkers MUST carry water on ALL walks - ONE LITRE MINIMUM**

NOVEMBER

- 03 (Sun) **Bushwalk—Sassafras Gully.** Meet at 9.30 at carpark opposite Springwood Station in Macquarie Road. Duration 4 hours. Grade 4. Contact Valerie Collins 59-2472.
- 04 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Darwin’s Walk.** Meet Wilson Park, Cnr. GWH/Falls Road at 9.45. Contact Heather Hastie 84.1297.
- 06 (Wed) **Empire Pass.** Meet at Lawson Bowling Club, North Lawson, at 10 am. Duration 3-4 hours. Grade 4. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509.
- 11 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—South Lawson Waterfalls.** Meet at the War Memorial, Honour Avenue, Lawson, at 9.30. Contact Helen Lomax 58.6993.
- 16 (Sat) **Bushwalk—Reinert’s Pass.** Meet at Mount Victoria Station at 10 am. Duration 5 hours. Grade 4-5. Contact Carol Butcher 57.3830.
- 18 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—To be advised.**
- 20 (Wed) **Bushwalk—Porter’s Pass.** Meet at Blackheath Station commuter carpark at 10 am. Duration 4-5 hours. Grade 5. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509.
- 25 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Giant Stairway-Federal Pass-ride Scenic Railway.** Meet in carpark above the Echo Point Tourist Information Centre (Cliff Drive) at 9.30. Contact Lee Tredinnick 57.4030
- 26 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 29 (Fri) **General Meeting** at The Hut at 7.30 pm.

	<p>KIDS’ CORNER My Top Five Walks</p> <p>When your parents next suggest a bushwalk, ask them to try one of my favourites for a fun family day.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asgard Swamp because of the rocks to climb on the way and the shale mine. 2. The Braeside because of the view at the top of the Bridal Veil Falls. 3. Linden Sawmill because of the old steam machinery you can climb at the picnic area. 4. Ruined Castle because of all the climbing on rocks. 5. Megalong Cemetery to Cox’s River for the thrill of the suspension bridge and a cool dip.— <i>Alex Wylie Atmore, age 8.</i> 	<p>Walking in the Mountains</p> <p>Terina and Serina and Skerina decided to go for a walk in the Blue Mountains, so off they went, walking along, singing a song “We are walking in the mountains, do de do da day...” and they met a.. kangaroo.</p> <p>“Hello Terina, Serina and Skerina”, said the kangaroo, “where are you going?”</p> <p>“We’re going for a walk in the Blue Mountains. Would you like to come along?” “Oh yes please”, said the kangaroo. So they walked along, Terina, Serina and Skerina singing a song “We are walking in the mountains, do de do da day...”, kangaroo going hop, hop, hop, and they met asnake.</p> <p>“Hello Terina, Serina, Skerina and kangaroo”, said the snake, “where are you going?” “We’re going for a walk in the Blue Mountains. Would you like to come along?” “Oh yes, I would like that very much”, said the snake. So they walked along, Terina, Serina and Skerina singing a</p>	<p>song “We are walking in the mountains, do de do da day...”, kangaroo going hop, hop, hop, snake going wriggle wriggle, wriggle, and they met a..... wombat.</p> <p>“Hello Terina, Serina, Skerina, kangaroo and snake”, said the wombat, “where are you going?” “We’re going for a walk in the Blue Mountains. Would you like to come along?” “Oh yes, what a good idea!”, said the wombat. So they walked along, Terina, Serina and Skerina singing a song “We are walking in the mountains, do de do da day...”, kangaroo going hop, hop, hop, snake going wriggle wriggle, wriggle, wombat going grunt grunt (wombat walk) and they met a..... kookaburra (hoo ha hoo ha)..... a frog (croak, croak)..... a dingo (howl, howl)..... an echidna..... a koala a butterfly a blue tongue lizard a lyrebird a grasshoppera possum (a very long story).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">—<i>Zoe O’Rourke, age 3.</i></p>
<p>Hut News would like to hear from children with poems, stories or essays about the Blue Mountains.</p>			

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