

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

Newsletter No. 3, December 1970.

Price: 10 cents.

Patron: Mr. Allen A. Strom,
Advisor in Conservation,
Dept. of Education, NSW.

"Natural areas once lost, are lost forever." --J.G.Mosley.

In this Issue: Our Society's Activities: Meetings, Outings, Library,
Walkabout with Graham; out-
side Activities; our Poet.

Our Patron: Thesis: "The Value of Natural Environment".
Mount Hay's Naturalness Endangered.

Tribute to Mr. B.Schleicher.

Growing Interest of the Federal Government in Conserva-
tion and Pollution.

Importance of the Newsletter as a source of information.

The Story of "SAVE KURNELL", "Banks' Paradise Lost".
Christmas Message.

Your Editor, Martin Kaub (1 Clarence-
st.Katoomba, Ph: 4-1754) anticipates
contributions before 28 Feb.1971.

(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the author and not
necessarily those of the Society of the Editor.)

xx

OUR SOCIETY.

Meetings: September: Due to very bad weather there was a small atten-
dance; the invited guestspeaker mistook the date;
attending members listened to a taperecording on
"Time Running Out" by Judith Wright.

October: Big meeting at St.Hilda's Hall Katoomba; speaker:
Dr.D.F.McMichael, Director of the Nat.Parks and
Wildlife Service of NSW showed slides of the Ser-
vice and outlined the Services policies for a big
audience of members and visitors of affiliated
societies. His address caused concern amongst a
number of our members.

November: Average attendance; several members away from the
mountains; very good film shown by Mr.Langford-
Smith Jr. on Aboriginal Welfare with interesting
explanations.

Last meeting for the current year will be the Christmas-get-together
at our Conservation Hut at the Valley-of-Waters on 12th December.

Due to absence of our Secretary, Miss Isobel Bowden, because of
health reasons, no information can be given at this time about the co-
ming guestspeakers for the early months of 1971. We have good reason
to believe that Miss Bowdens absence will be for a short while and we
extend to her good wishes for her well-being; members sure will miss
her never-tiring interest for our society.

Outings: Notes by Convenor Nora Dillon, 114 Backhousest.Ph: WWF: 293.
Over the past three months an average of 10 members and
friends have made excursions to: LINDEN-SOUTH, NORTH LAWSON,
and Centennial Glen, BLACKHEATH.

On each occasion a great variety of flowers and birds were
seen as well as ferns and fascinating rocks; during the N-
Lawson outing Miss Bowden identified over 70 varieties of
wildflowers.

The outings continue to be held on the first Saturday each
month; further information can be had from the Convenor.

Library: During the absence of our Librarian:Mr.Danny Monk, our libra-
ry will be supervised by Miss Margaret Pinniger. We extend
our hearty thanks for her welcome assistace.

Donations of books are always welcome if appropriate to Nature
studies and/or conservation. Books can be borrowed from Miss
Pinniger at our monthly meetings. P.T.O. for list of Books.

Books in our Library:

FreshWater Fishes of Austr....G.Whitley.; Austr. Insects ...J.Child.;
 An Austr. Bird Book.... Leach.; No Room in the Ark ...A.Moorehead;
 Lost World of Kalamare ...L.v.d.Post.; Nature's Playground..M.Leigh.
 Life of the Bee... M.Maeterlinck.; The Virgin Islands .. H.Hannan.
 Useful Birds of S.Austr... R.Hall.; Austr. Bird Book .. Chas.Barrett. ~
 Some Birds of City of Bl.Mts.. Reta Vellenga.; Trees of NSW. Anderson.
 Austr.Plants for the Garden..Th.Stead.; Budgerigars .. Cyril Rogers.
 Animals of the World:Austr...G.Whitley.; Austr.Seashores..W.J.Dakin. ~
 Wildflowers of Austr...Th.Stead.; The Face of Austr... Chas.F.Laserson.
 Wonders of the Gr.Barr.Reef...Roughley.; Nature Walkabout..V.Serwenty.
 The Great Extermination...Marshall.; Silent Spring ..Rachel Carson;
 Austr.Snakeman ...;Roy Norrey.; The Otters Tale ...Gavin Marshall.
 Antarctic Explorer.. " " .; Gardening is such Fun .. E.Morton. ~
 Sky Searcher in Austr..." .; Land of a Thousand Atolls.. Eibesfeldt.
 Blue Mountains and Jenolan Caves.
 Illustrated Encyclopedia of Animal Life.

We are proud that the number of books has already reached 30. (As a matter of interest we mention that at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary an extensive library on natural history and conservation is always available for consultation.)

New Pamphlets available in the Hut are on: Mount Kaputar; Fire Prevention & Control; new issue of David Stead Wildlife Research Foundation; Paddy Pallin's Catalogue.

Members Activities: Walkabout with Graham.N e s t i n g - t i m e .

Spring and early summer is an interesting time for bird lovers: nesting-time. Not all birds nest in the spring; Lyre birds e.g. nest in the winter; yellow winged Honey-eaters nest any time when conditions suit them; Red browed Finches often nest again in the autumn. In the dry inland many species nest again after the rain.

But here in the mountains: now is the time to see mating flights and displays; to hear the most melodious bird songs and to find cunningly hidden and beautifully constructed nests.

The most interesting nest found by the writer is in a Scribbly Gum at Minni-Ha-Ha Falls Picnic area. Built in the fork of an upright dead branch, the outside of the nest is covered with flakes of bark, so cunningly placed, that the nest appears to be part of the tree. The builder is the orange winged Sitella. Unlike the Tree Creeper, which hops up the tree trunks seeking insects, the Sitella starts at the top and hops down. The perfect camouflage of the nest is somewhat contradicted by the behaviour of the birds.

The noted ornithologist Keith Hindwood reports that up to a number of eight have been seen attending one nest and feeding the young. Three birds attended ours, calling constantly "chur-dit, chur-dit". By watching them, we found the nest.

When, however we scrambled with some difficulty to the lower branches of the tree and with the aid of a mirror tied to a pole, examined the inside of the nest, a possible explanation arose. The nest was lined with grey-green lichen and contained young birds covered with pale grey down! Now, Robins -yellow, rose and scarlet- use lichen to camouflage the outside of their nests. Sitella, it seems, use it to camouflage the inside. To any predator looking down, the grey-green lining and downy grey young would blend with the dead branch and the white bark of the Scribbly Gum!

In one case, reported by Keith Hindwood, two Sittelas laid in the same nest and sat side by side until the eggs hatched...!(G.Alcorn)

Members Activities: Our Poet. "KURRAWONGS" by James Anderson.

"All day long - from Pine Trees high,
 "Where they sit and squeak - mid the branches high,
 "To tell me of uncounted wrongs -
 "Sweep low, the loved-not Kurrawongs.."

Outside Activities: Your Society was represented on:

26-10'70 at Sydney, the A.C.F.'s Membership drive sponsored by Sir Garfield Barwick.
 13-11'70 at Springwood, lecture on birds by Arnold McGill.
 28-11'70 at Lismore, first lecture night of a week-end Seminar on "Birds of the Seashore" by Arnold McGill.

We promised in Newsletter No.2 to give you a resumé of Mr.Strom's thesis:

THE VALUE OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

The Fundamentals.

The thesis of these comments is based on the understanding, that man needs the resources of nature in order to live well and to live fully. The dignity of his living, the quality of his living, depends upon a nice balance in the use of resources to supply man with food, fibre, materials, sources of energy and natural environment. The production of insular approaches, championship of one facet of the resource and bitter opposition to others, has stifled the concept that man's well being is proportional to the quality of environment - and we are all aware that our environment is being rapidly "fouled up".

The Governor General has reminded us that it will profit us. but little if we plan to live in padded cells of luxury whilst the air becomes polluted, the waters fouled, naturalness extirpated and the resources rendered incapable of being able to yield continuously. I make no excuses for my conviction that a careful balanced approach to the use of the resources is threatened by two acts of stupidity on the part of Man:

- 1/ The acceptance of increases in world population as inevitable and perhaps even desirable in some areas;
- 11/ The rush towards massive exploitation of the resources in our time and for our immediate benefit, without regard for the long term effect and the moral obligation we owe to those whom we are creating.

The bone of contention today is the conflict between preservation of naturalness, where naturalness of natural environment is offered as a resource essential to the dignity of Man, and several other uses of the same land for the exploitation of resources equally important to Man. The view is taken in this paper, that natural environment cannot be tampered with and continue at the same time to exist as a fulsome expression of the agencies of evolution. It is not a matter of one resource being more important than another, but rather that one resource must remain unexploited in order that the others may be available in total for the benefit of man. In such a head-on collision, there seems to me to be an imperative demand for man to use his ingenuity in planning for the use of each resource so as to avoid the total loss of any one particular centre of supply, overall or at any place of valuable occurrence.

The Value of Natural Environment.

Naturalness or natural environments is here postulated as a resource of nature which man must continue to possess and to use, if he is to live at his present standards and indeed, to raise them. It is, no less important and no more than any other resource in mans complex needs for food, fibre, materials and energy. Amongst the reasons substantiating this claim, are these:

- 1/ Natural environments are complex associations of living things in equilibrium with the physio-chemical qualities provided by the non-living. Under pristine condistions, the equilibrium has been evolved by natural forces, thus providing invaluable guidelines on the management of plant and animal species for the more sophisticated needs of man.
- 11/ Plants and animals colonise environments by remarkably integrated processes of interdependence and adaptation. The energy trapped by plantlife from the sun flows through the communities in many diverse ways providing references for scientific studies. Adaptation brings wide diversifications and many genetic differences. These are the sources from which man continues to domesticate species for his particular purposes.
- 111/ The processes of learning are continuous. Each generation must go back to first principles, each generation has the opportunity to probe further into understanding the factors which operate within natural environments, provided the natural environments are available for educational reference.

1111/ Part of our heritage is to experience unaltered natural environments in order that living may be more enjoyable, indeed more bearable. This experience varies in almost as many ways as there are individuals, but by and large, the approach may be reduced to a number of accepted activities that are loosely called recreation aimed at recreating the many qualities of living that are lost in the sophistication of urbanisation and industrialisation. It is not acceptable to all, that naturalness in living, from the patch of green along a suburban street to the wild untamed wilderness in a national park, shall be cluttered up with "improvements"; it seems to me, that we should attempt, whilst there is still time, to amend our thinking and our behaviour, to provide for the satisfaction of the endearing qualities of man, rather than watch while our offspring become adapted to accepting a world of continuous houses, fences, industrial complexes and the environmental pollution which goes with them.

11111/ We have learned to exploit the natural environment in many ways: plants for timber, honey and several other products; the waters for fish, crustaceans, algae; animals for game. Yet we do not to this time fully understand what importance lies in retaining sufficient checkerboard of natural areas but we do have some evidence of the shortsightedness in failing to recognise the consequences of changing the whole face of the earth to suit our short term needs. Streams and lakes, once the breeding grounds of plentiful supply of protein are now devoid of life; water supplies depleted because catchments have been cleared and used for alien purposes; increases in pests because the natural predators do not have harbour. Is there anyone who can say for certainty that the reduction in vegetational complexity and the increase in artificial discharges will not affect the important gaseous balances in the atmosphere? Man cannot afford to dispose of naturalness as unnecessary simply because he does not understand its importance.

Management of Natural Environment.

Like any resource which man uses on a sustained yield basis, natural environment must be managed if it is to survive and be always available.

By and large, management means establishing reservoirs of the resource, providing the for use and enjoyment of the resource are well considered, and finally making sure, that usage and all other influences on the resource, conform the rules are laid down. Again, the purpose of the rules is to guarantee the sustained yield of the resource.

It is now accepted, that natural environment is best secured in its pristine condition, by the establishment of reserves of the land upon which the natural environment occurs. The highest classifications of such reserves are represented by national parks and nature reserves, the former providing an accent on human usage of naturalness for recreation and enjoyment, the latter with accent on scientific and educational references.

For national parks and nature reserves to fulfill their maximum values, the rules of usage must carry such limitations as best benefit the delicate equilibria that exist on the site under determination, as there is no purpose in dedicating lands for the preservation of naturalness if the usages permitted result in the loss of that naturalness. Herein lies the major conflict of multiple usage and the major task of management. Management must be based upon a very thorough understanding of the forces which are operative in producing the naturalness within the Park or Reserve and if this understanding is beyond present accumulated knowledge, it is better to refrain from making decisions that are vertically "fiddling with nature".

One other point is important: natural systems are interlocked wholes and survival of any one or any number, is more likely to be guaranteed if the system is complete or if the systems are distributed over large and self contained landscapes. Landuses in conflict with the preservation of naturalness should not be permitted within the boundaries of parks and reserves and any alien land use increases in significance as it progresses into the reservation, away from the periphery.

MOUNT HAY'S NATURALNESS ENDANGERED?

In a meeting of the Bl.Mnts Conservation Federation on 12th Nov., it was decided to write letters to Messrs. Dunbier and Coates, requesting their support in approaching Mr. Tom Lewis, the Minister for Lands, opposing the proposed firetrail from Mt. HAY to Mt. WHITTON; and furthermore recommending to all its constituent bodies to send similar letters to the M.L.A.'s.

These representations should make clear our opposition on the following grounds: " 1/ The Bl.Mnts Park Trust had considered this same matter, but opposed the proposal;

" 2/ The Parks Superintendent, although he had considered this matter, had declared it unnecessary;

" 3/ Firetrails at present laid down are considered sufficient for the deploying of firefighting forces for controlling wildfires or aerial ignitions in the case of controlled burning;

" 4/ The whole area between Wentworth-creek-trail and Grose River-east of Mt. HAY should be kept inviolate and so preserved.

Furthermore it is pointed out, that members of the constituent bodies of the Federation consist of bushfire-captains, their deputies and thereto many members who lost properties in the 1968 bushfires. ..."

A further meeting of the Federation will be held soon at the Conserv. Hut.

TRIBUTE TO MR. B. SCHLEICHER, Pioneer of Bl.Mnts Conservation.

A large gathering attended the special Commemoration service for Mr. Schleicher and the unveiling of a rockpool and waterfall on 15th Nov. at St. James' Church of Engl. Hazelbrook. Due to Mr. Schleicher's encouragement our Society came into being and we can only add our deep respect and gratitude to the words spoken to him at the service at Hazelbrook.

GROWING INTEREST OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN CONSERVATION & POLLUTION.

A considerable amount of information on the Select Senate Committee on Waterpollution and Wildlife Conservation has been received from Senator Gordon S. Davidson and the Clerk of their Committee. Publication has to be postponed to a later date, but interested members can approach the Editor.

IMPORTANCE OF THE NEWSLETTER as a source of Information.

Our Patron writes in the yearly report of the Nature Conservation Council: " The greatest problem is the difficulty which is encountered in getting information into the heads (and minds) of bank- and file-members of the (Society in our case). This points up the need for finance to establish well sized, full and frequent publications, distributed to all members and a wide circle of persons on a mailing list. .. There is not better way! .."

In a letter to your Editor, our Patron wrote: "...Found your last Newsl. issue most interesting and useful. It is most important to keep members informed and active .."

SAVE KURNELL, "Banks' Paradise Lost".

From the periodical "NATION" an article on "Banks' Paradise Lost" reads as follows:

"Two hundred years ago, Capt. James Cook discovered the east coast of Austr. When he and his botanist, Sir Joseph Banks, saw the Kurnell Peninsula and Botany Bay, it must have looked like some Garden of Eden. They walked among trees ten feet in circumference. There were groves of waving palms and wooded grasslands. The place was alive with cockatoos, parrots and a rich range of marsupials. And to show their respect for what they had seen, they called it Botany Bay.

"One hundred years after Banks had named his Paradise, the peninsula was selected by the authorities as a future industrial site for 'obnoxious trades' - a decision which was never reversed. Today 'Botany Bay' is a cesspool of industrial filth and the peninsula an eroded wasteland. The Cape they named after Banks is bathed on one side by raw sewage and on the other by industrial effluent...."

The NATIONAL TRUST of Austr. appealed in a brochure: "...Just do nothing and watch it die -- who cares!" for support of preservation of this landscape in distress. We quote from the Trusts Yearly report:

This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in August 2020 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

Newsletter No 3 December 1970.

Price: 10 cents.

Patron: Mr Allen A Strom
Advisor in Conservation
Dept of Education NSW

"Natural areas once lost, are lost forever." J G Mosely.

In this Issue: Our Society's Activities: Meetings, Outings, Library, Walkabout with Graham: outside Activities; our Poet.

Our Patron: Thesis: "The Value of Natural Environment".

Mount Hay's Naturalness Endangered.

Tribute to Mr B Schleicher

Growing Interest of the Federal Government in Conservation and Pollution.

Importance of the Newsletter as a source of information.

The Story of "SAVE KURNELL", "Banks' Paradise Lost"

Christmas Message.

Your Editor, Martin Kaub (1 Clarence St Katoomba Ph: 4-1754) Anticipates contributions before 20 Feb 1971.

(Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily of the Society or the Editor.)

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

OUR SOCIETY.

Meetings:

September: Due to very bad weather there was a small attendance; the invited guest speaker mistook the date; attending members listened to a tape-recording on the "Time Running Out" by Judith Wright.

October: Big meeting at St Hilda's Hall Katoomba; speaker: Dr D F McMichael, Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW showed slides of the Service and outlined the Services policies for a big audience of members and visitors of affiliated societies. His address caused concern amongst a number of our members.

November: Average attendance; several members away from the mountains; very good film shown by Mr Langford-Smith Jr on Aboriginal Welfare with interesting explanations.

Last meeting for the current year will be the Christmas get together at the Conservation Hut at the Valley of Waters on 12th December.

Due to absence of our Secretary, Miss Isobel Bowden, because of health reasons, no information can be given at this time about the coming guest speakers for the early months of 1971. We have good reason to believe that Miss Bowdens' absence will be for a short while and we extend to her good wishes for her well-being; members sure will miss her never-tiring interest for our society.

Outings: Notes by Convenor Nora Dillon, 114 Backhouse St. Ph: WWF: 293. Over the past three months an average of 10 members and friends have made excursions to : LINDEN- SOUTH, NORTH LAWSON, and Centennial Glen BLACKHEATH.

On each occasion a great variety of flowers and birds were seen as well as ferns and fascinating rocks; during the North Lawson outing Miss Bowden identified over 70 varieties of wildflowers.

The outings continue to be held on the first Saturday each month; further information can be had from the Convenor.

Library: During the absence of our Librarian Mr Danny Monk, our library will be supervised by Miss Margaret Pinniger. We extend our hearty thanks for her welcome assistance.

Donations of books are always welcome if appropriate to Nature studies and/or conservation. Books can be borrowed from Miss Pinniger at our monthly meetings.

Books in our Library.

Fresh Water Fishes of Australia	G Whitley
Australian Insects	J Child
An Australian Bird Book	Leach
No Room in the Ark	A Moorehead
Lost World of Kalamare	L V D Post
Nature's Playground	M Leigh
Life of the Bee	M Maeterlinck
The Virgin Islands	H Hannan
Useful Birds of South Australia	R Hall
Australian Bird Book	Chas Barrett
Some Birds of City of Blue Mountains	Reta Vellenga
Trees of NSW	Anderson
Australian Plants for the Garden	Th Stead
Budgerigars	Cyril Rogers

Animals of the World:Australia	G Whitley
Australian Seashores	W J Dakin
Wildflowers of Australia	Th Stead
The Face of Australia	Chas F Laseron
Wonders of the Great Barrier Reef	Roughley
Nature Walkabout	V Serwenty
The Great Extermination	Marshall
Silent Spring	Rachel Carson
Australian Snakeman	Roy Norrey
The Otters Tale	Gavin Marshall
Antartic Explorer	Roy Norrey
Gardening is such Fun	E Morton
Sky Searcher in Australia	Roy Norrey
Land of a Thousand Atolls	Eibesfeldt
Blue Mountains and Jenolan Caves	
Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Animal Life	

We are proud that the number of books has already reached 30. (As a matter of interest we mention that at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary an extensive library on natural history and conservation is always available for consultation.)

New Pamphlets available in the Hut are on Mount Kaputar, Fire Prevention and Control, new issue of David Stead Wildlife Research Foundation, Paddy Pallin's Catalogue.

Members Activities: Walkabout with Graham.

Nesting time.

Spring and early summer is an interesting time for bird lovers: nesting time. Not all birds nest in the spring; Lyre birds e.g. nest in the winter, yellow winged Honey eaters nest any time when conditions suit them, Red browed Finches often nest again in the autumn. In the dry inland many species nest again after the rain.

But here in the mountains, now is the time to see mating flights and displays, to hear the most melodious bird songs and to find cunningly hidden and beautifully constructed nests.

The most interesting nest found by the writer is in a Scribbly Gum at Minni-Ha-Ha Falls Picnic area. Built in the fork of an upright dead branch, the outside of the nest is covered with flakes of bark, so cunningly placed, that the nest appears to be part of the tree. The builder is the orange winged Sitella. Unlike the Tree Creeper, which hops up the tree trunks seeking insects, the Sitella starts at the top and hops down. The perfect camouflage of the nest is somewhat contradicted by the behaviour of the birds.

The noted ornithologist Keith Hindwood reports that up to a number of eight have been seen attending one nest and feeding the young. Three birds attended ours, calling constantly "chur-dit, chur-dit". By watching them we found the nest.

When, however we scrambled with some difficulty to the lower branches of the tree and with the aid of a mirror tied to a pole, examined the inside of the nest, a possible explanation arose. The nest was lined with grey-green lichen and contained young birds covered with pale grey down! Now, Robins, yellow, rose and scarlet – use lichen to camouflage the outside of their nests. Sitellas, it seems, use it to camouflage the inside. To any predator looking down, the grey-green lining and downy grey young would blend with the dead branch and the white bark of the Scribbly Gum!

In one case, reported by Keith Hindwood, two Sitellas laid in the same nest and sat side by side until the eggs hatched..!! (G Alcorn)

Members Activities : Our Poet. KURRAWONGS” by James Anderson

All day long from Pine Tree high,
Where they sit and squeak mid the branches high,
To tell me of uncounted wrongs
Sweep low, the loved not Kurrawaongs..

Outside Activities: Your Society was represented on:

26-10-70 at Sydney, the ACF’s Membership drive sponsored by Sir Garfield Barwick.

13-11-70 at Springwood, lecture on birds by Arnold McGill

28-11-70 at Lismore, first lecture night of a weekend Seminar on “Birds of the Seashore by Arnold McGill”.

We promised in Newsletter No 2 to give you a resume’ of Mr Strom’s theses:

THE VALUE OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

The Fundamentals.

The thesis of these comments is based on the understanding that man needs the resources of nature in order to live well and to live fully. The dignity of his living, the resources to supply man with food, fibre, materials, sources of energy and natural environment. The production of insular approaches, championship of one facet of the resource and bitter opposition to others, has stifled the concept that man’s wellbeing is proportional to the quality of environment – and we are all well aware that our environment is being rapidly “fouled up”.

The Governor General has reminded us that it will profit us, but little if we plan to live in padded cells of luxury whilst the air becomes polluted, the waters fouled, naturalness extirpated and the resources rendered incapable of being able to yield continuously. I make no excuses for my conviction that a careful balanced approach to the use of the resources is threatened by two acts of stupidity on the part of Man:

1/ The acceptance of increases in world population as inevitable and perhaps even desirable in some areas;

2/ The rush towards massive exploitation of the resources in our time and for our immediate benefit, without regard for the long term effect and the moral obligation we owe to those whom we are creating.

The bone of contention today is the conflict between preservation of naturalness, where naturalness of natural environment is offered as a resource essential to the dignity of Man, and several other uses of the same land for the exploitation of resources equally important to Man.

The view is taken in this paper, that natural environment cannot be tampered with and continue at the same time to exist as a fulsome expression of the agencies of evolution. It is not a matter of one resource being more important than another, but rather that one resource must remain unexploited in order that the others may be available in total for the benefit of man. In such a head-on collision, there seems to me to be an imperative demand for man to use his ingenuity in planning for the use of each resource so as to avoid the total loss of any one particular centre of supply, overall or at any place of valuable occurrence.

The Value of Natural Environment.

Naturalness or natural environment's is here postulated as a resource of nature which man must continue to possess and to use, if he is to live at his present standards and indeed, to raise them. It is, no less important and no more than any other resource in man's complex needs for food, fibre, materials and energy. Amongst the reasons substantiating this claim, are these,

1/ Natural environments are complex associations of living things in equilibrium with the physio-chemical qualities provided by the non-living. Under pristine conditions, the equilibrium has been evolved by natural forces, thus providing invaluable guidelines on the management of plant and animal species for the more sophisticated needs of man.

2/ Plants and animals colonise environments by remarkably integrated processes of interdependence and adaption. The energy trapped by plant life from the sun flows through the communities in many diverse ways providing references for scientific studies. Adaptation brings wide diversifications and many genetic differences. These are the sources from which man continues to domesticate species for his particular purposes.

3/ The processes of learning are continuous. Each generation must go back to first principles, each generation has the opportunity to probe further into understanding the factors which operate within natural environments, provided the natural environments are available for educational reference.

4/ Part of our heritage is to experience unaltered natural environments in order that living may be more enjoyable, indeed more bearable. This experience varies in almost as many ways as there are individuals, but by and large, the approach may be reduced to a number of accepted activities that are loosely called recreation aimed at recreating the many qualities of living that are lost in the sophistication of urbanisation and industrialisation. It is not acceptable to all, that naturalness in living, from the patch of green along a suburban street to the wild untamed wilderness in a national park, shall be cluttered up with "improvements"; It seems to me, that we should attempt, whilst there is still time, to amend our thinking and our behaviour, to provide for the satisfaction of the endearing qualities of

man, rather than watch while our offspring become adapted to accepting a world of continuous houses, fences, industrial complexes and the environmental pollution which goes with them.

5/ We have learned to exploit the natural environment in many ways: plants for timber, honey and several other products; the waters for fish, crustaceans, algae; animals for game. Yet we do not to this time fully understand what importance lies in retaining sufficient checkerboard of natural areas but we do have some evidence of the short sightedness in failing to recognise the consequences of changing the whole face of the earth to suit our short term needs. Streams and lakes, once the breeding grounds of plentiful supply of protein are now devoid of life; water supplies depleted because catchments have been cleared and used for alien purposes; increases in pests because the natural predators do not have harbour. Is there anyone who can say for certainty that the reduction in vegetational complexity and the increase in artificial discharges will not affect the important gaseous balances in the atmosphere? Man cannot afford to dispose of naturalness as unnecessary simply because he does not understand its importance.

Management of Natural Environment.

Like any resource which man uses on a sustained yield basis, natural environment must be managed if it is to survive and be always available.

By and large, management means establishing reservoirs of the resource, providing the use and enjoyment of the resource are well considered, and finally making sure, that usage and all other influences on the resource, conform the rules are laid down. Again, the purpose of the rules is to guarantee the sustained yield of the resource.

It is now accepted, that natural environment is best secured in its pristine condition, by the establishment of reserves of the land upon which the natural environment occurs. The highest classifications of such reserves are represented by national parks and nature reserves, the former providing an accent on human usage of naturalness for recreation and enjoyment, the latter with accent on scientific and educational references.

For national parks and nature reserves to fulfil their maximum values, the rules of usage must carry such limitations as best benefit the delicate equilibria that exist on the site under determination, as there is no purpose in dedicating lands for the preservation of naturalness if the usages permitted result in the loss of that naturalness. Herein lies the major conflict of multiple usage and the major task of management. Management must be based upon a very thorough understanding of the forces which are operative in producing the naturalness within the Park or Reserve and if this understanding is beyond present accumulated knowledge, it is better to refrain from making decisions that are vertically "fiddling with nature".

One other point is important: natural systems are interlocked wholes and survival of any one or any number, is more likely to be guaranteed if the system is complete or if the systems are distributed over large and self-contained landscapes. Land uses in conflict with the preservation of naturalness should not be permitted within the boundaries of parks and reserves and any alien land use increases in significance as it progresses into the reservation, away from the periphery.

MOUNT HAY'S NATURALNESS ENDANGERED?

In a meeting of the Blue Mountains Conservation Federation on 12 November, it was decided to write letters to Messrs Dunbier and Coates, requesting their support in approaching Mr Tom Lewis, the Minister for Lands, opposing the proposed fire trail from Mt Hay to Mt Whitton; and further more recommending to all its constituent bodies to send similar letters to the MLA's.

These representations should make clear our opposition on the following grounds:

- 1/ The Blue Mountains Park Trust had considered this same matter, but opposed the proposal:
- 2/ The Park Superintendent, although he had considered this matter, had declared it unnecessary;
- 3/ Fire trails at present laid down are considered sufficient for the deploying of firefighting forces for controlling wildfires or aerial ignitions in the case of controlled burning;
- 4/ The whole area between Wentworth Creek trail and Grose River-east of Mt Hay should be kept inviolate and so preserved.

"Furthermore it is pointed out, that members of the constituent bodies of the Federation consist of bushfire-captains, their deputies and thereto many members who lost properties in the 1968 bushfires."

A further meeting of the Federation will be held soon at the Conservation Hut.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

TRIBUTE TO MR B SCHLEICHER. Pioneer of Blue Mountains Conservation.

A large gathering attended the special Commemoration service for Mr Schleicher and the unveiling of a rockpool and waterfall on the 15th November at St James Church of England Hazelbrook. Due to Mr Schleichers encouragement our Society came into being and we can only add our deep respect and gratitude to the words spoken to him at the service at Hazelbrook.

GROWING INTEREST. of The Federal Government In Conservation & Pollution.

A considerable amount of information on the Select Senate Committee on Water Pollution and Wildlife Conservation has been received from Senator Gordon S Davidson and the Clerk of their Committee. Publication has to be postponed to a later date, but interested members can approach the Editor.

IMPORTANCE OF THE NEWSLETTER as a source of Information.

Our Patron writes in the yearly report of the Nature Conservation Council: "The greatest problem is the difficulty which is encountered in getting information into the heads (and minds) of rank and file members of the (Society in our case). This points up to the need for finance to establish well sized, full and frequent publications, distributed to all members and a wide circle of persons on a mailing list...There is not a better way!"

In a letter to your Editor, our Patron wrote: "Found your last Newsletter issue most interesting and useful. It is most important to keep members informed and active."

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

SAVE KURNELL "Banks Paradise Lost".

From the periodical "NATION" an article on "Banks Paradise Lost" reads as follows:

"Two hundred years ago, Captain James Cook discovered the east coast of Australia. When he and his botanist, Sir Joseph Banks, saw the Kurnell Peninsula and Botany Bay, it must have looked like some Garden of Eden. They walked among trees ten foot in circumference. There were groves of waving palms and wooded grasslands. The place was alive with cockatoos, parrots and a rich range of marsupials. And to show their respect for what they had seen, they called it Botany Bay.

"One hundred years after Banks had named his Paradise, the peninsula was selected by the authorities as a future industrial site for 'obnoxious trades' – a decision which was never reversed. Today 'Botany Bay' is a cesspool of industrial filth and the peninsula an eroded wasteland. The Cape they named after Banks is bathed on one side by raw sewage and on the other by industrial effluent."

The NATIONAL TRUST of Australia, appealed in a brochure "...Just do nothing and watch it die – who cares!" for support of preservation of this landscape in distress. We quote from the Trusts Yearly report:

Note: The remainder of this edition of the Newsletter has been lost.