



Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society

NEWSLETTER

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NEXT MEETING:

FRIDAY 10th April at 8.00 p.m. at the Teacher's Centre, Glenbrook Infants School, Ross Street, opposite the Tennis Courts.

Wendy Godfrey will be taking members and visitors on a trip through Tasmania with her photographs taken on their last visit in the Christmas holidays.

FUTURE MEETINGS

FRIDAY 12th June at the above venue, when Peggy Clark will address the meeting.

FRIDAY 8th May meeting will be addressed by Thistle Stead on Field Study Centres.

NEXT WALK.

SUNDAY 12th April to Jamison Creek at Wentworth Falls. Meet at the Station Wentworth Falls at 10.30a.m. Winsome Gregory leads the walk.

Next Ivy Market.

Saturday 11th April, 1981, at Springwood Civic Centre. Come along and browse around the myriad of stalls, including the society's, with its plants for sale.

MINING IN NATIONAL PARKS.

Recently Mr. Wran stated that there would be no mining in National Parks, and it appears that attention is being drawn away from the report, "Resolution of Conflicts between Underground Extraction of Coal Resources and Dedication and Management of Areas as National Parks and Nature Reserves". Also the seminars to be held at Sydney, Lithgow and other centres in N.S.W. were cancelled with the excuse that the National Parks and Wildlife Service could not spare the staff. Could this be pre-election tactics on the part of Mr. Wran?

WALK TO WALL'S CAVE.

Quite a number of members and visitors arrived at Blackheath on the morning of March 15th, to be greeted by a perfect Autumn day. The beauty of Evan's Lookout, awe-inspiring, seeped in, as we were guided towards small honeyeaters by Beverley Fielder. A walk around the picnic area planted with hundreds of native plants by the Society for Growing Australian Plants and this society, revealed that most had survived the harsh drought with no hand watering, and were indeed growing well.

From Evan's Lookout, we drove to the track to Wall's Cave. The walk was highlighted with a variety of birds and frequent stops to investigate plantlife. Vegetation changed from open heathland to ferns and tall gums in the valley of the underground River. The rock formations danced with reflections from the Underground River. The massive overhang of Wall's Cave was enough to stop everyone in their tracks, and lunch was enjoyed sitting on a small beach beneath the cave.

Meagan, Fiona and Bronwyn Powell delighted in playing in the creek, while others climbed to the top of the incised valley to discover unusually eroded and beautifully coloured rocks. The afternoon passed happily with further exploring and photographing.

Everyone felt refreshed upon reaching the cars, agreeing that more relaxing afternoons with time to really see an area, would be appreciated in future walks too.

RUSSIA WINDS DOWN ITS WHALING INDUSTRY

In a statement issued in Vladivostok, the Russians said their eastern fishing fleet had stopped whaling and its three factory ships were being converted into fish - processing plants. However, conservationists are restraining their exhuberance, remembering two years ago when similar claims were made.

Russia and Japan are the only countries that still whale on a large scale. Last year they accounted for 70% of whales caught under the International Whaling Commission's quota system.

Russia's whaling fleet is in a serious state of disrepair. Will the Russians now follow their committment through and vote with those members of the I.W.C. who want a total ban on whaling? Last year this motion failed to win the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority amongst the 24 members. With Russia's, and possibly China's, help, this motion may be passed in July this year.

Japan is still the problem. Its whaling operation is large enough to make it pay, and refuses to accept that killing whales is essentially different to killing beef cattle. If outvoted, Japan might leave the I.W.C. and thus be free of the quota system.

reported in "The Australian" 30/1/81.

DUCK SEASON.

Eleven thousand game licences were issued to prospective hunters last year, and this season from March 7th to May 31st promises to attract even more. Licence holders may hunt eight species of ducks: black duck, wood duck, grey teal, chestnut teal, mountain duck, hardhead duck, pink-ear duck and shoveler. There is also a \$1,000 fine or six months jail for accidentally or purposely shooting the Freckled duck, whose behaviour, colouring and internal anatomy resemble that of the swan. Scientists consider them to be living fossils.

The NPWS sets bag limits to protect the duck species from being "over-killed". First day limit is 20 ducks per person, then 10 on subsequent days in the season. Perhaps these figures are too high when a NPWS survey shows that hunters would bag about 5 ducks on the first day, and 25 throughout the whole season. If all licence holders were that enthusiastic, 275,000 ducks could die in the season!!!!

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

What sort of conservation organization is the World Wildlife Fund?

Their program to date is admirable, with near one million dollars committed to wildlife projects from which a great deal of knowledge on rare and endangered species should eventuate. But will the WWF speak out on critical issues? Will it be an old Australian Conservation Foundation? That was set up by mining and established interests, and failed to speak out decisively on Lake Peddar and the Great Barrier Reef.

Donors and trustees of the Fund are involved in environmentally harmful projects in their day to day work. Will WWF policy be influenced through its dependence on these corporations? For example:

1. Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd. (\$49,000) - largest donor - interest in Ok Tedi copper mine New Guinea, NW Shelf gas, Worsley Aluminium which threatens Jarrah forests of WA. B.H.P. directors are also Trustees of WWF.
2. I.C.I. Australia Ltd. (\$13,000) Rare orange bellied parrot's habitat threaten by proposed construction of petrochemical plant near Geelong.
3. Associated Pulp and Paper Mills (\$2,000) Forest concessions throughout Tasmania, including extensive rainforest in NW Tasmania.
4. Electrolytic Zinc Industries. (\$2,000) Partner in uranium mines situated in middle of Kakadu National Park. Responsible for heavy metal poisoning of fish in the Derwent River.
5. Peko-Wallsend (\$5,000) Partner in uranium mining with EZI above. Director is a trustee of WWF.
6. BMI (\$4,000) Owns saw mills along NSW coast and heavily involved in woodchip scheme on the north coast of NSW.
7. CSR (\$3,000) own Pyneboard at Tumut where pine plantations have caused clearing of large areas of native forest and loss of habitat to wildlife. Director of CSR is President of WWF (Sir Noel Foley)

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