



O.F.F. NEWS



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LAST 2007 MEETING: TALK ON FUNGI

Dr Howard Wildman is an expert on the extraordinary biochemical properties of fungi and various other 'quietly achieving' organisms that play very important roles in ecosystem functioning. The same properties also provide enormous potential for biotechnological, pharmaceutical and other valuable applications such as the '**myco-remediation**' of degraded and polluted soils. We are delighted to have Dr Wildman speak about these items at our last meeting for 2007 on **26th November**. At this special meeting there will also be a social supper and bargain stall as detailed overleaf.

BARREN GROUNDS WALK , OCTOBER 27

For this walk the Barren Grounds Reserve lived up to its reputation of **beautiful wildflower displays** in Spring. The heath was in full bloom with several species of Boronia (*B. barkeria*, *B. thujona*), and Tree Ziera (*Ziera arborescens*) was flowering prominently in the gullies. We were serenaded by the very secretive and **endangered Eastern Bristlebird** at several locations and had one brief glimpse of it. A large flock of more than 50 Topknot Pigeons were seen overhead and near the picnic area were some Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos. The walk ended at the picnic area with afternoon tea and entertainment by a male Superb Blue Wren in full breeding plumage. (from a report by the leader, **Debbie Andrew**; the full version may be seen at www.off.oatleypark.com).

SNOWY MOUNTAINS 2008

Our annual Snowy Mountains trip in 2008 promises to be as exhilarating as ever, with reports of particularly spectacular wildflower displays this season. As usual it will be at **Smiggins Chalet** with details as follows:

Dates: Saturday, 12th Jan. to Saturday, 19th Jan.

Cost: \$50.50 per person per night, double or share

\$75 per person per night, single

\$27 per child per night (6-18 years).

We need to book at least 7 rooms for these prices. For bookings or further information please see **Robin Dickson** at the next meeting or phone her as soon as possible on **9580 5663**.

TOM JONGEJANS

We were extremely sorry to hear of the death of one of our members, Tom Jongejans, on 17th October. Tom and Wilhelmina (Willy) Jongejans have been active and highly regarded members of the Society since 1995. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Willy and family.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2008 ?

Three of our present Committee members have indicated that they will not seek re-election at the next **AGM on 4th February**. The Committee consists of 15 elected members who meet once per month, usually on the evening of the Monday following each monthly meeting. Duties of the Committee include attending to the Society's correspondence, financial matters, policies and activities. **If you are interested** in becoming a member it is suggested that you contact the Secretary or one of the present members before the AGM.

SPOTLIGHTING IN OATLEY PARK

Incredibly, the rain halted for a few hours to allow us to complete the spotlighting walk on the evening of 8th November. Oatley Park was looking great after the rain. Masses of white delicate blooms of Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), and numerous Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthi*) were spectacular in the spotlight. In several places we noted the locally **rare Gosford Wattle** (*Acacia prominens*). The animals also appreciated the break in the weather and we spotted eight **Brushtail Possums**, including two with young on their backs, two **Ringtail Possums** and, in a tree hollow, a **Rainbow Lorikeet**. Following the distinctive 'mopoke' call of a **Boobook Owl** we tracked it down and caught a brief glimpse as it flew off. All participants agreed that more local spotlighting walks like this should be arranged next year. (from a report by the leader, **Debbie Andrew**. See O.F.F. website www.off.oatleypark.com for the full report)

NEW MEMBERS

If you wish to join O.F.F. you can obtain an application form from the Membership Officer on 9580 5663 or download it from our website at <http://off.oatleypark.com/documents/membershipform.pdf>

Meetings are held at the **Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street, Oatley.**
(near the corner of Letitia Street)

It is intended that meetings commence promptly at 7.45 pm.

Visitors and accompanied children are welcome to attend all meetings and field days.

Coming Events

November 26 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45 pm. Dr Howard Wildman will speak on 'Fungi - the environment's quiet achiever'. (see overleaf). This is the last monthly meeting for 2007, ending with a social supper and a bargain stall. Please bring a plate of 'finger food' for the supper, and plenty of money for the bargains.

December 10 (Monday) Annual Christmas Picnic in Steamroller Park (part of Oatley Park), from about 5.30 pm. Bring your own food, drink etc and, if you wish, picnic chairs and table.

February 4th, 2008 (Monday) Annual General Meeting. Election of officers, slide night and social supper. If you have old slides of past trips/events that members have not seen, or new slides or digital photos of special interest, please bring them along.

GRAFFITI IN PARKS !

With the apparent increase in graffiti, some vandals are now disfiguring **rock surfaces in Oatley Park** and elsewhere. If you notice any graffiti please notify your local Council. If you see the vandals in the process **please let the police know**, including any details that may help in catching the offenders. Back in 2002 it was estimated that graffiti vandalism was costing NSW **up to \$100 million per year**. This apparently included costs of clean up but not of prevention. It does not appear that the problem is diminishing. (www.graffiti.nsw.gov.au)

ADDRESSING THREATS TO TREES

Clearly not everyone appreciates trees and some do not hesitate to remove them if at all possible. O.F.F.'s continuing expressions of concern about this issue has given us two representatives on the **Hurstville City Council Tree Management Working Party (TMWP)**: Alan Fairley and Melina Amerasinghe. Another member of this working party is Sharyn Cullis, also an O.F.F. member. After several years of inactivity, the Council reconvened TMWP in September and a report by Alan on their most recent meeting will be on our website, www.off.oatleypark.com. The website has other information about threats to trees in the Oatley area and on our progress in preparing a **register of significant local trees**. We are seeking suggestions for trees to include in the register and any **interesting or funny stories** you may have about our local trees.

DON'T FORGET, 10th DECEMBER

That's the day for **Picnic in the Park**, our annual Christmas get-together. It will be near the steamroller in Oatley Park after 5.30pm. **Bring your own** food, drinks, picnic chairs, table etc. Barbecues will probably be prohibited because of the fire danger.

WALK FOR WARMING, 11th NOVEMBER

About **25,000 people** were estimated to be at the 2007 Walk for Warming in Hyde Park, Sydney. Most of the banners and speeches highlighted the significance of global warming issues in the **elections on November 24th**. Stimulating speeches were made by politicians Bob Brown, Peter Garrett, and Lee Rhiannon, but the most eloquent, moving and remarkable speaker was a **9-year old schoolboy, Jack Simmons !** A notable, but not surprising, absentee from the rally was the Federal Minister for the Environment and Climate Change, Malcolm Turnbull.

VERY BRIEFLY

International Buy Nothing Day: November 24, organised by various groups around the world to expose the adverse effects of consumerism. Details: Lynda, (040) 969 8321, <http://www.botanybay.info/> or <http://www.buynothingday.co.uk>

Seminar on New Greenhouse Gas Reporting Law:

November 28, Wednesday 12 pm for 12.30 start, Clayton Utz Boardroom, 1 O'Connell St. Sydney, Environmental Defender's Office, RSVP 9353 5344.

Coastcare Week : December 3-9

Recommended new book

'How to build cat proof fencing & cat enclosures', Free from Victorian Government. Ph. 13 61 86 or see www.pets.info.vic.gov.au/community/catenclosure.htm (thanks to 'Hut News' for this information)

? QUERY ?

For Howard Wildman at his fungi talk next meeting : 'Are mushrooms shaped like umbrellas because they grow in damp places ?' (question by Doug Rickard in recent Sutherland APS Newsletter)