



RHHFFPS

Wallumetta

Newsletter of the Ryde-Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna
Preservation Society Inc.

Website: <http://rydehffps.org.au/>

Member of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC)
and founding member of the Powerful Owl Coalition

No. 312

JUNE

2025

We acknowledge the Wallumedegal, original inhabitants of the Ryde – Hunters Hill area.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

A major item on the agenda for the Field of Mars Consultative Committee meeting is Council's plans to proceed with funding of high priority actions on the Master Plan for the Reserve. This follows from a resolution adopted by Council on 10 December 2024 which provided funding for Council infrastructure including natural areas such as the Field of Mars.

The Master Plan was adopted in 2023 and includes an implementation plan with aspects identified in priority order. There are 19 high priority areas/elements for implementation identified in the Master Plan.

Walking trails and the boardwalk are in the current operational and delivery plans for Council. The estimated total cost is \$5.22M of which \$2.29M is identified for high priority. The estimated time for delivery of these high priority items under the Master Plan is 42.5–52.5 months.

An amount of \$505,447 has been identified for delivery of these works. These funds will only cover part of the projects and the remaining 81% of project costs will need to be identified from other funding sources. For Council, other sources of funds include those allocated to other projects or from grants from the NSW or Federal Government.

This situation will require our ongoing efforts to increase the priority of these works in Council's budgetary processes.

On a different note we congratulate Jerome Laxale on his re-election as MP for Bennelong with a substantially increased margin and look forward to continuing positive relations on environmental matters at the local and national level.

Frank Breen,

President

In this issue:

- [President's Note](#)
- [Coming Events:](#)
 - [The Squatters' Grab](#)
 - [Music on Mars](#)
- [Past Event – NCC Forum](#)
- [News from Field of Mars](#)
 - [Bushcare](#)
- [New Water-based Battery](#)
- [FNPW Strategy](#)
- [Nurdles](#)
- [Natural Turf Alliance](#)
- [NCC News - Macquarie Marshes](#)
- [Climate Action Spiral of Silence](#)
- [Visitor Centre](#)
- [Members Welcome](#)
- [Rug Raffle](#)
- [RHHFFPS Committee](#)

COMING EVENTS:

VOICES OF KU-RING-GAI Tuesday 10 June, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM at Ku-ring-gai Town Hall: COMMUNITY FORUM – A NON-PLASTIC FUTURE FOR COMMUNITY OVALS

Update on the Norman Griffiths Oval and (see "[What's the Story with Norman Griffiths](#)") and the future of Synthetic Fields in Ku-ring-gai and beyond (and see page below). Learn about the NSW Government's new Best-Practice Guidelines for Sporting Fields and hear expert insights from the latest AgEnviro and Natural Turf Alliance reports. [RSVP](#)

CITY OF RYDE Saturday 31 May, 10:00am: RYDE TREE DAY COMMUNITY PLANTING

Location is Looking Glass Bay Park, behind 30 Punt Rd, Gladesville. A free BBQ for participants will follow at 12:00 noon. [RSVP https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/RydeTreeDay](https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/RydeTreeDay)

World Environment Day Celebrations throughout June. For all details please visit <https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Events/World-Environment-Day-Celebrations>

RHHFFPS Saturday 14 June, 2.30 pm: THE SQUATTERS' GRAB BY WAL WALKER

Researcher Wal Walker will talk about his book, **The Squatters' Grab: Where it All Went Wrong**, which "looks at the failures of government and administration, in London and the Colony, that allowed the violent dispossession of the Indigenous people. It unearths, many for the first time, the people and incidents responsible for this disaster." This talk will be in the Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre, with afternoon tea afterwards.

THE HABITAT Wednesday 25 June / Saturday 28 June 11.00 am – 12 noon: SMALL BIRD HABITAT CORRIDORS AND CONNECTIONS

At The Habitat Community Nursery, 251 Quarry Rd, Ryde, Bev Debrincat will introduce you to The Habitat, talk about small birds and what habitat they need, tell you a little about two habitat corridors being worked on, and demonstrate how to plant small bird habitat. [RSVP by email info@iewf.org](mailto:info@iewf.org) - and tell which day. Bookings will be confirmed via email.

RHHFFPS Sunday 20 July, 10.00 am: TREE WALK

In anticipation of National Tree Day, our Tree Walk will be an opportunity to admire the natural wonders of the Field of Mars Reserve. Around this time of year we expect to see some wonderful displays of wildflowers in the natural bushland of the Reserve.



Our Tree Walk will depart from the Visitor Centre in the Reserve at 10am. Walkers should wear appropriate clothing for the weather, including closed shoes and a hat. We return to the Visitor Centre around 12 noon for a barbecue lunch. Children aged 5-12 are welcome but must be with an adult. The event is free, though small donations are welcome to help meet the Society's costs. Booking is essential: please email alfred.vincent@bigpond.com or leave a message on 9879 6067.

CITY OF RYDE Sunday 27 July, 10:00AM: NATIONAL TREE DAY COMMUNITY PLANTING

At ELS Hall Park, next to 85 Kent Rd, North Ryde, this will conclude 12 noon with a free BBQ.

RHHFFPS MUSIC ON MARS (save the date!) Sunday 21 September 2025

PAST EVENTS:

Federal elections filled everyone's attention recently. On Wednesday 23 April RHHFFPS co-hosted the **NCC Candidates' Forum**. This community event was held at Eastwood Uniting Church. Election candidates contesting the seat of Bennelong were invited to respond to questions from the community, focusing on cost of living, climate, energy, and future of Australia's environment. Candidates for minor parties came; sitting Labor member Jerome Laxale was ill at the time so he attended via an online link but the well-advertised Liberal Party candidate was absent.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD OF MARS

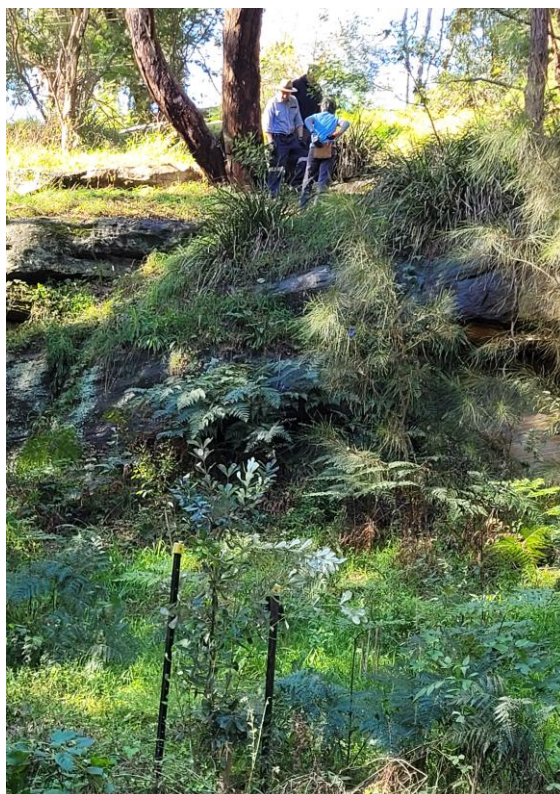
Photographer Marco Jimenez gave us permission to publish this excellent view of a Powerful Owl he and his partner spotted quite high in a tree, just off the Doyle track:

The wet autumn weather resulted in more trees falling. A large one lay across the Buffalo Creek Boardwalk middle crossing. To minimize damage, contractors were called in to cut it down and leave the logs nearby.



Bushcare

Congratulations to Streamwatch participants; City of Ryde volunteers were mentioned in the latest Greater Sydney Landcare newsletter <https://www.greatersydneylandcare.org/from-soil-to-stream-bushcare-embraces-water-monitoring/>.



The autumn weather resulted in many bushcare sessions being cancelled. Wet soil enabled effective removal of well-rooted weeds including privet (*Ligustrum spp.*), Paddy's lucerne (*Sida rhombifolia*), kikuyu (*Cenchrus clandestinus*), couch (*Cynodon dactylon*) and other running grasses. At all sites and at all times of the year but especially in autumn, we are removing Cobbler's Pegs (*Bidens pilosa*).

Following weed removal, there is pleasing natural regeneration at the Buffalo Creek areas near Monash Road, Kennedy Street, and Strangers Creek.

Cemetery Creek 2 site continues to be impacted by works within the cemetery. The recently constructed vault at the cemetery boundary is complete, but we have repair work to do with soil and debris left behind on the Reserve side. Another vault is now under construction nearby.

NEWLY DEVELOPED WATER-BASED BATTERY COULD SIGNIFICANTLY HELP HOUSEHOLDS

Engineers at Monash University have developed a water-based battery that could help households store roof-top solar energy more safely, cheaply and efficiently than ever before.

Head of Materials Science and Engineering at Monash University Professor Matthew Hill* says, "The water is like salt water. The salts move from one side to the other; that's what carries the electricity. We've been working on this for 3-4 years; like a lot of research you fail most of the time and eventually you work out what you're doing wrong... we've got a system that we're pretty excited about."

Described as being like two fish tanks of water and joined with iron, these promise to be cheaper and safer than batteries currently available. To see a report and hear a full interview go to <https://www.4bc.com.au/the-newly-developed-water-based-battery-that-could-significantly-help-households/>

** Professor Matthew Hill grew up in Ryde. He was a student at Ryde East Primary School in the 1980s and is the son of Kim Phillips, current president of the Ryde District Historical Society. Matt received the Prime Minister's Prize for Science in 2014.*

FNPW NEW STRATEGY GUIDING THE YEARS AHEAD

Partnering For Impact



As we celebrate our 55th year of conservation, we're proud to launch *Partnering for Impact*, a bold new strategy that will guide the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife from 2025 to 2028.

For over five decades, we've been at the forefront of protecting Australia's biodiversity. But now, with mounting environmental challenges, we're stepping up in a bigger way. This plan isn't just about preserving nature — it's about empowering communities, expanding protected areas, and forging powerful partnerships to safeguard Australia's natural heritage.

Key Goals

- Protect & restore 10,000+ hectares of high-conservation value land
- Secure \$50 million in funding from corporates, government, and philanthropy
- Establish 20+ high-impact partnerships
- Develop 10+ flagship projects, each valued at over \$1 million
- Expand national reach to ensure broad-scale environmental impact

Our Strategic Pillars

- Growing National Parks
- Healing Our Land



NURDLES: THE PLASTIC POLLUTION CRISIS IN MELBOURNE'S WATERWAYS

Tiny plastic pellets are polluting Melbourne's waterways at alarming levels.

These lentil-sized plastics spill from industrial sites, washing into stormwater drains, rivers, and beaches — posing a serious environmental threat.

Citizen scientists from have uncovered widespread nurdle contamination, with thousands found in stormwater traps. Marine life mistakes them for food, leading to injuries and chemical exposure.

Despite existing environmental laws, enforcement has been weak. EJA lawyers are calling on the Victorian EPA to act now. [Read more about microplastic pollution what needs to be done >](#)



NATURAL TURF ALLIANCE

A SUSTAINABLE AND GREENER FUTURE FOR OUR PARKS AND OVALS

NSW Government's Best-Practice Guidelines for Sporting Fields were published in January 2025. Developed by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, this comprehensive guide supports the planning, construction, and maintenance of climate-resilient natural turf playing surfaces across New South Wales.

These guidelines respond to the increasing need for more sustainable and durable community sporting facilities in a changing climate. They provide a valuable resource for councils, turf managers, planners, and sporting organisations.

Key Highlights from the Guidelines:

- Benchmark performance standards for turf quality, irrigation, drainage, and wear capacity
- Practical strategies for designing, constructing and upgrading natural turf fields to suit a variety of site and climate condition
- Case studies and comparative data on field types including sand-over-soil, hybrid turf, and best-practice natural turf fields
- Clear water-use benchmarks and irrigation scheduling tailored to different NSW regions
- Guidance on enhancing field resilience to drought, flood, and increased usage

Why It Matters:

An assessment of over 1,000 fields across NSW found that 76% are in poor or marginal condition, requiring significantly more resources to maintain. These new best-practice guidelines provide a roadmap to improve field quality, reduce water use, and extend the life of natural turf surfaces—without relying on synthetic alternatives. [Download the full publication here](#)

NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL (NCC) NEWS – GOLD MINING IN THE MACQUARIE MARSHES?

From Mel Gray, Water Campaigner:

We have some important progress to report. After we exposed this reckless decision in the media and in parliament, the NSW Resources Regulator withdrew its previous approval of the drilling. The story didn't end there – the miner, Australian Consolidated Gold Holdings (ACGH), took the Regulator to court seeking a variation on the application. However, in good news for the Marshes the miner has recently dropped the case and withdrew its application!

The Macquarie Marshes are internationally recognised for their rich biodiversity and cultural significance. The Marshes include 200,000 hectares of interconnected semi-permanent wetlands on both private and public land. **This is one of the most important water bird nesting sites in the country, supporting hundreds of thousands of water birds at its peak.** These marshes provide critical habitat for numerous threatened and endangered species such as the Australasian bittern, magpie goose, and Australian painted snipe. **NCC seeks their permanent protection.**

‘SPIRAL OF SILENCE’: CLIMATE ACTION IS VERY POPULAR, SO WHY DON’T PEOPLE REALISE IT?

- précis of article by Damian Carrington published in **The Guardian 22.4.2025**

Researchers find 89% of people around the world want more to be done, but mistakenly assume their peers do not...

The illusion that climate action is not popular is global. So imagine dispelling that myth: such a shift could be a gamechanger, pushing the world over a tipping point into climate progress.

A communication campaign, low-cost and scalable, could be among the most powerful tools available to fight the climate crisis. Decades of psychological research indicates that correcting misunderstandings can change people’s views across a swathe of issues.

Silent Majority



Social scientists and economists considered: “What kind of research can we do?”

Their biggest result was a huge, globe-spanning survey that revealed the remarkable fact that people across the world are united in wanting action to fight the climate crisis but remain a silent majority, because they think only a minority share their views.

The team found 89% of people across the world wanted their national governments to do more to fight global heating. More than two-thirds said they were willing to give 1% of their income to fight the climate crisis. Crucially, however, they thought only a minority of other people – 43% – would be willing to do the same.

Even in the petrostates of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the vast majority – about 80% – were willing to give 1% of their income to climate action. How many of these wanted more government action is unknown: these countries did not allow the question to be asked.

Those feeling the heat most directly had the strongest pro-climate views. Those in rich countries were significantly less willing to contribute 1%. And the countries where people most strongly wanted to fight the climate crisis had implemented significantly more climate policies.

Perception gaps are real

A US study from 2022 found people thought only [about 40% of their fellow citizens supported climate policies](#): the real proportion was about 75%. An earlier study found the [same in China](#).

Other commonly held beliefs have been revealed as false, including the idea that people in rich nations are unwilling to give money to poorer nations to help fight the climate crisis. A [study testing support for the redistribution of money](#) from a global emissions trading scheme from the rich to the poor found the scheme was backed by 76% of Europeans and 54% of those in the US.

Political illusions

You might think politicians finely tuned to public opinion, but they are not. And that matters, said Dr Niall McLoughlin, at Climate Barometer, which analyses climate opinions in the UK.

The group found in 2024 that [72% of the UK public supported onshore wind](#) being built in their areas, but only 19% of MPs thought a majority of their constituents did so. Climate action is backed even by those who vote for political parties that are explicitly opposed to it.

The apparent contradiction is explained by the fact that many voters supported other policies but not their environmental policies. Informing the policy debate on climate issues can be very helpful. If we make politicians more aware of what the people in their country want, they might actually act on the people’s preferences.”

Social creatures

Most people are social creatures, highly influenced by what others do and say. So correcting mistaken beliefs about the views of fellow citizens can make an impact on what you think and do. There is a [lot of research](#) showing this can shift people's views on a range of social justice issues.

First, people are drawn towards "social norms", the perceived standard of acceptable behaviour.

People are also "conditional cooperators": they are more likely to contribute to the public good if they think others are doing the same.

[Studies](#) have shown that [telling people](#) how popular environmental action is with others can increase their own actions, for example in [saving energy](#) and [green living](#).

But correcting the misperception did not lead to people putting more priority on government climate action, or living greener lives themselves.

The impact of dispelling mistaken views might depend on how it is corrected, for example, using stories rather than data, or correcting repeatedly not just once. [Other barriers might also remain](#), such as entrenched ideologies. But one approach is clearly shown to work: correcting people's misperception about the [proportion of climate scientists](#) that agree that global heating is human-caused and a serious problem, which is extremely high.

Breaking the silence

Why do these collective illusions about the level of support for climate action exist at all? What is the root cause? The answer is uncertain but is likely to be a complex mix of human psychology (e.g. people tend to think worse of others than themselves) and fossil-fuelled disinformation.

Another critical reason is the existence of a very large, sophisticated, well-funded and longstanding misinformation campaign being driven by the fossil fuel industry and its allies, sowing doubt and division to maintain their profits. This campaign has acted as an "enormous megaphone" for the small but vocal minority that dismiss climate science. As a result, they tend to dominate the public square. Climate change has joined sex, religion and politics as a taboo topic. So communicating social norms is one of the most powerful interventions you can make.

What about today's rapidly changing geopolitics, with rising nationalism, Trump entrenching climate denial in the US, and the threat of trade wars and recessions? This makes the data on people's real climate views more important than ever. The People's Climate Vote result showed that people are actually very multilateral. 86% of people thought that countries should put aside their differences on other issues and work together. People understand our fates are tied together when it comes to the climate crisis and they want world leaders to act on it."

And everyone can help break the "spiral of silence". The empowering truth is that every public statement counts, and the more diverse the voices, the more effective the message will be.

This story is part of [the 89% project](#), an initiative of the global journalism collaboration [Covering Climate Now](#).

Postscript - This is what we're up against:

- Bad actors spreading disinformation to fuel intolerance.
- Lawyers from the rich and powerful trying to suppress stories they don't want you to see.
- Lobby groups with opaque funding who are determined to undermine facts about the climate emergency and other established science.
- Authoritarian states with no regard for the freedom of the press.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD OF MARS VISITOR CENTRE



We recently welcomed frequent visitor and bushwalker Dianne to our team. **More volunteers are still needed** to keep the centre open on weekends! Our roster of 4-hour shifts on weekends is negotiated to suit members' availability; some like to do it alone while others may pair with another rostered volunteer or bring a friend. It is a wonderful place to relax and enjoy peaceful natural surroundings with interesting activity of birdlife and other animals to observe. The rewarding bonus is that we get to meet visitors to the Reserve and offer our free maps and information leaflets. We'll help you get started on your first shift.

NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME:

Please pay membership fee by direct transfer to our Bendigo Bank account: RYDE HUNTERS HILL FLORA AND FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC, BSB 633-000, Account number 190716589.

Include your name in the transaction description; and email your name, address and phone number to rhffps@gmail.com

Or you may pay by cash: Complete and hand in this form with payment in a sealed envelope at the Field of Mars Visitor Centre, or post to:

RHHFFPS, PO Box 552, Gladesville 1675.

NAME:

Address:

Phone:

Annual Membership (add \$10 for newsletter to be sent via Australia Post):

\$

Individual \$ 15 (+ \$ 10)

Family \$ 35 (+ \$ 10)

Concession \$ 10 (+ \$ 10)

(Students/Pensioners) Donation

Total Payment:

Email address to receive your newsletter – please print clearly:

YARNKNIT RUG RAFFLE PRIZE

Donated once again by Holy Spirit Yarn Group, you could be the lucky winner when the raffle is drawn at the AGM in early 2026. This new rug is handmade and suitable for both winter and summer use. Keep it for yourself, give it to a family member or friend or donate to a worthy organisation. Funds raised support the Society and the organisations we support.

You may buy tickets at the Visitors Centre or online by transfer to our Bendigo Bank account: RYDE HUNTERS HILL FLORA AND FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC, BSB 633-000, Account number 190716589. Include your name and “raffle” in the transaction description, and email contact details to rhffps@gmail.com



RHHFFPS

Postal address: PO Box 552, Gladesville, NSW 1675 **Email:** rhffps@gmail.com

Website: <http://rydehffps.org.au/> + like us on **FACEBOOK**.

All photos in *Wallumetta* are by the editor or from the article source unless otherwise indicated.