



RHHFFPS

Wallumetta

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

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

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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Recently the Society lodged a submission with Hunters Hill Council to express our concerns about the Gladesville Town Centre Master Plan. The Master Plan provides for towers rising to 19 storeys in the area now occupied by the Gladesville Village Centre between Victoria Road and Massey, Flagstaff and Cowell Streets.

We do not support the Master Plan; it is not consistent with key aspects of Council's strategic plans and key documents supporting the proposals are not available for public scrutiny and assessment.

Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) provides for development proposals to *fit with the established character* (p19) of the local area and Council's Local Housing Strategy states *Council will facilitate new housing that is consistent with local character and will ensure that local character is an important consideration in the assessment and regulation of new development, including on sites dedicated to seniors living, affordable housing and mixed-use development* (p5).

The proposal for towers to 19 storeys in the Gladesville town centre does not fit with the established character of the local area and will radically and detrimentally change its character.

The proposal for *removal and/or re-location of the heritage item on Cowell Street* (the cottage at No. 10) is completely at odds with the statement in the LSPS that *Council is dedicated to preserving the heritage of the area as it is fundamental to the local character of the area* (p34).

The Society does not support removal or relocation of this building.

In respect of the natural environment the Community Strategic Plan (P32) states, *Ensure that future land use planning and management enhances and protects biodiversity and natural heritage.*

The documents attached to the Council report of 19 July 2021 make no reference to enhancing vegetation biodiversity and bushland. The open spaces mentioned in the documents do not provide for a mix of native vegetation which would support the local native fauna and enhance the urban amenity.

Urban renewal projects should create the opportunity to enhance native vegetation and mitigate for changing climate conditions. The Gladesville Master Plan should provide for this.

The economic feasibility analysis by Atlas Urban Economics is not published on Council's website. Council has now advised that the economic feasibility analysis is subject to "commercial in confidence" and will not be published. Without publication of the analysis it is not reasonable to conclude that the proposals are economically feasible or justified.

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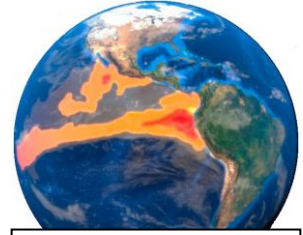
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[PRESIDENT'S NOTE – continued]

Council should withdraw the current draft plan and present proposals that meet the key aspects of its strategic planning strategies. The proposals should be consistent with the existing character and heritage values of the local area and contribute to enhanced native vegetation and amenity.

Frank Breen,

President



[From Juan Gaertner/Science Photo Library/Getty Images.]

EL NIÑO HAPPENING MORE AS CLIMATE WARMS

Report by Ellen Phiddian, published by Cosmos 17 August 2021

The models of an increase in extreme weather events are agreeing.

El Niño is the warm phase of the El Niño La Niña Southern Oscillation (ENSO) that occurs across the tropical Pacific Ocean roughly every five years. ENSO affects weather systems across the world, bringing extreme weather such as floods and droughts. El Niño generally causes drier conditions in Australia and South-East Asia, and wetter and warmer conditions in the Americas.

El Niño and La Niña events are expected to increase in frequency and intensity as a result of climate change, according to a new review [published](#) in *Nature Earth & Environment*.

Dr Cai of the CSIRO says the basic issue is that ENSO variability is increasing in response to greenhouse emissions, so El Niño and La Niña are becoming more intense and more frequent.

ENSO is the fluctuations in sea surface temperature in the southern Pacific Ocean. During the El Niño phase of the cycle, there are warmer waters and thus more precipitation on the eastern side of the Pacific Ocean, and drier conditions on the western side. During La Niña, the opposite two extremes occur; more severe and more frequent drought, and more severe and frequent floods.

In Australia, El Niño events are associated with droughts, and La Niña with floods and cyclones, but the effects reach well beyond this country. The authors point out, for instance, that a 1998 La Niña event coincided with floods in China that led to the deaths of thousands of people, and the displacement of over 200 million, as well as the flooding of more than 50% of Bangladesh's land.

Extreme El Niño events happened roughly once every 20th century, but they're now increasing and expected to double in frequency to one in 11 years or so.

"Time is running out to avoid catastrophic consequences," says Dr Cai.

BOTTLE TOPS – News from Clean Up Australia

In theory, most plastic bottle caps are fully recyclable. Unfortunately there are differing rules about whether caps are allowed at all, or if they should be kept on or off bottles for recycling.

Individual plastic caps are often too small for automated sorting machines and can fall through machinery. This means they shouldn't be put into a recycling bin on their own. But if attached to a bottle, the tops can trap air inside, which means when the bottles are compressed during the recycling process, the caps shoot off and cause damage to the machines.

On/Off? In/Out? Tricky! You can always check with your local council but there is an alternative...

Resparkle, an Australian-made company, is on a mission to reverse the tide on plastic use and waste. **Lids4Planters** is a project to keep plastic lids from landfill. They recycle the lids and turn them into beautiful planter pots. You, your co-workers, schools, friends and families may help to collect lids to fill a medium-sized Australia-Post bag. You can collect plastic lids from:

- Water bottles
- Milk bottles
- Shampoo caps (not pumps)
- Body wash bottle caps (not pumps)

For more information, see <https://www.cleanup.org.au/bottletops>

PLOGGING

Clean Up Australia is also promoting “Plog-A-Thon” – an activity for those who are keen to do something good for yourself while helping the planet.

“Plogging” is a Swedish word for picking up rubbish while jogging or exercising. Clean Up Australia is embracing the term to celebrate a fun way to keep fit and promote sustainability.

You can register for Clean Up Australia’s Plog-A-Thon as an individual or business and plog any day or time that suits you to exercise within your local area (abiding by COVID-19 restrictions).

Participants track the distance plogged and rubbish collected, and may raise funds to support Clean Up Australia. Prizes are offered for those who register. For more information and to register see <https://www.cleanup.org.au/plogathon>

Some members and local bushwalkers already do this in the Field of Mars Reserve as a personal voluntary effort, keeping tracks, creeks and boundary areas clean. Most take the rubbish home to put in their own bin but, if you do this and end up with too much to carry home, please leave it in a bag at the back of the Visitor Centre building and let us know so it can be promptly removed.

MIRVAC WEST PENNANT HILLS SITE – DEVELOPERS WIN THE BATTLE FOR THE FOREST

The Mirvac development proposal to build 600 dwellings on the IBM site adjacent to Cumberland State Forest in West Pennant Hills, was vigorously opposed for many years, with over 4000 submissions against it from the local community and beyond. The award-winning IBM office complex, perfectly designed to suit its bushland setting, gave employment to over 2,000 workers. Originally the project was not supported by The Hills Shire Council, but the site was nevertheless rezoned from Business to Residential and Environmental Conservation to facilitate medium to high density development. Unfortunately in 2020 the proposal became one of the NSW Planning Minister's Covid-accelerated tranche of major projects to provide 'shovel-ready' construction jobs and was fast-tracked. On 15 September 2021 it progressed to the Local Planning Panel and, despite the many further valid objections raised, has now been approved.

This is an enormous loss but sadly not an altogether unexpected outcome. It's devastating for the valiant 'Forest in Danger' group that never ceased trying to protect the site containing critically endangered ecological communities including Blue Gum High Forest, Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest and vital habitat for the vulnerable Powerful Owls and a range of other native wildlife.

The IBM buildings could have been productively re-purposed for a much-needed technology or educational hub and community use, complying with the Greater Sydney Commission's sustainability strategies for the Green Grid and a '30 minute city'. Instead the buildings will be demolished with as many as 1,253 trees proposed for clear felling. The remnant forest, promised to be added to the Cumberland State Forest, has not been guaranteed in the approval conditions and will have little security during the demolition and ongoing construction period.

This contentious planning decision, giving precedence to 300 building jobs, is paradoxically short-sighted when governments everywhere now acknowledge the climate and species extinction crisis we're all facing. It is a failure of vision and runs counter to the sustainability rhetoric espoused by our NSW government.

Meanwhile, local wildlife carers are really worried because Mirvac plans to start vegetation clearing and demolition immediately, in spring, when all the native fauna are still in their nests. One of the carers has started up a change.org petition because they want Mirvac to delay the vegetation clearing until the end of spring, after the young have left the nests. Please sign this petition and share as widely as you can. The loss of all of that wildlife is too dreadful to contemplate. <https://chng.it/dQSWGz7M48>

ECLASS OUTBOARDS

An Australian business based in Kiama is advertising electric outboard motors. Various models have power outputs ranging from 4kW to 30kW. They are advertised as being suitable for outboard boating on rivers, lakes and inshore waters. By comparison with conventional petrol outboards, the purchase prices are still relatively high but there are many environmental advantages.



DOES NATURE HAVE RIGHTS?

By Amalyah Hart, Originally published by Cosmos magazine

In April this year, the Blue Mountains City Council, west of Sydney, became the first council in Australia to enshrine “rights of nature” as a core principle. The [Australian Earth Laws Alliance](#) organisation consulted with the council to create their new framework.

In practice, it means that all future planning in the region will have to consider the right to existence of all the natural entities – from endemic species of plants and animals to features like landscapes and waterways – across 1400 square kilometres, most of which is national park land.

What’s a river without its water? Problems with the framework

But Erin O’Donnell, a specialist in water law and policy at the University of Melbourne, warns these laws are not always capable of properly protecting the ecosystems they govern. For example, O’Donnell says many rivers don’t actually retain the rights to their own water:

“We’re not translating this idea of rights of nature strongly enough into our water law and governance frameworks. Rights of nature may not be the right tool to solve some of the urgent problems, but what it can do really profoundly is begin to transform that relationship between people and rivers.”

O’Donnell also points out that rights of nature are pioneered by – and depend upon – the leadership of indigenous people globally, who are often left out of the conversation.

CFC BAN SLOWED GLOBAL WARMING

New research shows just how much the 1987 Montreal Protocol has protected the planet – reported by Amalyah Hart, Cosmos 19 August 2021.

There’s some good news among the bad in relation to climate change. An international team of researchers has found that the global chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) ban introduced in 1987 may have prevented the Earth from warming an extra 2.5°C by the end of this century. Specifically, the ban helped to mitigate climate change by protecting plants from increased UV radiation, controlling a ‘scorched Earth’ scenario.

The *1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer* was an international agreement designed to stop the production and import of ozone-depleting substances. It set all countries binding, progressive phase-out obligations for substances including CFCs, halons and less damaging transitional chemicals such as hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs).

Before the protocol, CFCs and HCFCs were abundantly used in all sorts of products because they’re relatively non-toxic and less flammable than other paraffin hydrocarbons. The chemicals were used as refrigerants, aerosol propellants and degreasing solvents, among other applications.

But as science began to reveal the damage these types of chemicals were doing to the upper ozone layer, the global community recognised the critical importance of phasing them out.

New modelling paints a stark picture of what the ‘World Avoided’ – the Earth as it would be today without the Montreal Protocol. The findings show that if ozone-destroying chemicals had been left unchecked, global air temperatures would be set to rise by an additional 2.5°C by 2100.

The ban protected us in two ways:

- reducing the depletion of the ozone layer, thereby reducing our exposure to UV-B rays and heating (preventing an increase of 1.7°C); and
- protecting plant life that sequesters carbon and slows the rate of climate change (preventing an increase of 0.8°C).

The success of the Montreal Protocol is a small but heartening signal that environmental diplomacy can – and should – work. The new study adds to a body of evidence showing how the Montreal Protocol has protected our ozone layer in the 34 years since its inception.

GELION STORAGE BATTERY PRODUCTION TO CREATE RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTION AND JOBS IN SYDNEY'S WEST

Readers of Wallumetta may recall our report on page 4 of our December 2020 edition, about low-cost zinc-bromide battery technology, a much cheaper and safer technology than lithium ion batteries, developed by Professor Maschmeyer and his team. 9 months later, on 9 September 2021, the ABC released the following report by Cecilia Connell.

As the uptake of renewable energy increases, a new storage battery that can operate under extreme stress conditions is being touted as a game-changer.

Key points:

- The 'Gelion' battery stores energy captured from renewable sources like wind and solar
- It removes the need for expensive cooling and fire suppression systems
- A manufacturing pilot will soon get underway at the Battery Energy site in Fairfield



Professor Maschmeyer – photo by Billy Cooper: ABC News

The 'Gelion' battery, which uses a specialised zinc-bromide gel technology, is designed to overcome the limitations of traditional lithium ion and lead acid batteries. Its chemistry differs from conventional ones by being able to charge to 100 per cent and discharge to zero over a long duration. And it can be run at a high temperature — 50 degrees not a problem without cooling, and never catch fire. In fact, the inside of the batteries help to put fires out. Moreover, the battery can withstand temperatures of more than 600 degrees, without catching fire.

The technology can be retrofitted to existing manufacturing equipment. This removes the need for expensive auxiliary equipment such as fire suppression and air conditioning systems, bringing running costs down. It also means the stationary battery technology is suitable for remote outback conditions, especially in the mining and agricultural sectors.

Pilot manufacturing line in Western Sydney

The technology is about to enter the pilot manufacturing stage, which research and development manager, Zeynep Adali, said was an exciting prospect. The production line will be established at the Battery Energy site in Fairfield, a local company with more than 30 years' experience.

Managing director Gaby Peimer hopes to move to full-scale operation, to supply the Gelion battery for the domestic market, by the end of next year. It uses the infrastructure of the lead acid battery, to produce a novel battery in a shorter timeframe, that's more cost effective and also high performing. And it's fully recyclable, which supports the circular economy.

Australia embraces renewable energy technologies

The \$100 billion stationary battery storage market is tipped to grow exponentially.

Dr Alan Finkel, special advisor to the Australian Government on Low Emissions Technology, said there was increasing "enthusiasm for storage in the minds and pocketbooks of investors."

"As we build up penetration of solar and wind, and other forms of generation retire, we will need to increasingly support solar and wind with storage," he said.

"Every time we spawn a new technological product in the low emissions technology space, it's export opportunities, it's domestic opportunities and it's jobs."

FOSSIL-FREE STEEL FOR CAR MAKING

Volvo is first car maker to explore fossil-free steel.

While Australia talks up the potential for green steel, Swedish car and steel makers are getting it done with Volvo receiving its first delivery of fossil-free steel this month. Volvo expects to start manufacturing concept vehicles from the steel in 2022, with mass production to follow.

According to steelmaker Ssab (Svenskt Stål Aktiebolag - Swedish Steel Corporation), the fossil-free steel was produced using “hydrogen breakthrough ironmaking technology,” in a partnership with iron ore producer Lkab and energy company Vattenfall. The delivery of fossil-free steel to Volvo marks a significant milestone both for green steel production and for automotive industry supply chain emissions.

The fossil-free steel is produced by replacing coking coal with renewable electricity and hydrogen. Ssab aims to move to commercial scale production of the green steel within five years and be completely fossil-free and zero emissions by 2045.

The iron and steel industry is the largest industrial consumer of coal for both heat and coke, and represents 7 per cent of energy sector emissions worldwide.

Green steel has been touted as “an historic opportunity” for Australia by [Grattan Institute](#), who found green steel produced with vast and cheap renewable energy is our country’s largest and most economically viable clean energy opportunity with the potential to create tens of thousands of jobs. Sweden produces almost as much steel as Australia and is world-leader in green steel.

Volvo has made a series of climate announcements including plans for all its vehicles to be “fully electric” by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2040, including emissions cuts across its vehicles, operations and logistics, materials and suppliers. According to Volvo, emissions from steel and iron production make up around 20-35 per cent of the material and production emissions for each car. As well as carbon neutral vehicle manufacturing plants and fossil free steel, Volvo’s aims to increase the share of recycled plastic, aluminium and steel in its cars.

Much of the discussion relating to car emissions has focused on comparing emissions from petrol and diesel cars to electricity used by electric vehicles. Lifecycle emissions from battery electric vehicles are already much lower than conventional vehicles, with reductions growing bigger as electricity grids shift to renewable energy. As car makers like Volvo shift to electric vehicles, materials and production of cars and batteries will make up a growing share of lifecycle emissions.

CARBON MIGHT BE THE PROBLEM BUT IT’S ALSO THE SOLUTION

From <https://www.ecovoice.com.au/carbon-might-be-the-problem-but-its-also-the-solution/>

The race against time to prevent irreversible climate change damage continues to be a major global crisis – and whilst carbon dioxide is ultimately the problem, Australia’s Environmental Cowboy is proving that ‘mining’ carbon back out of the atmosphere could help at fixing it.

Khory Hancock, who is better known as the Environmental Cowboy - <https://khoryhancock.com/> - is on a mission to enable businesses to integrate profitable carbon projects into their current practices through the regeneration of forests, oceans and soils. Working with farmland management company Upscale Carbon - <http://www.upscalecarbon.com.au/> - Khory is overseeing projects with a focus on making natural resources more financially valuable when they remain intact, by the creation of carbon credits.

Khory explained there are only two real solutions to climate change – renewable energy and carbon farming. Carbon farming is basically a way to ‘mine’ or draw down the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere using the power of nature’s regeneration process; mainly through photosynthesis in plants. It aims to build better soil health, improve ocean health, by planting or regrowing forests instead of cutting them down.

Carbon credits are a financial product with the associated environmental value attached. They are traded like shares, so that regenerating nature and reversing climate change becomes profitable.



FUTUREFEED

Khory is also working on a related project that explores how seaweed farming can not only help to protect reefs and regenerate the ocean to reverse climate change, but can also improve profitability for agriculture. Specialist CSIRO organisation FutureFeed - <https://www.csiro.au/en/research/animals/livestock/futurefeed> - found that by incorporating seaweed into cattle feed, methane emissions can be reduced by up to 99%. If just 10% of livestock producers added only 1% of seaweed meal to ruminant livestock's daily feed intake, it would have the equivalent impact of taking 100 million cars off the road. This concept also has benefits for farmers, showing improved productivity alongside the reduction in methane emissions.

NOISY MINERS – AN AUSTRALIAN SUCCESS STORY?

On 27 August 2021 the Australian National University Sustainable Farm Team held a webinar in which their ecologists talked about how to create habitat that will bring back the birds we want. Ecologist Richard Beggs explained how noisy miners have become an overabundant species with major ecological impacts in Australia, and what we can do to support smaller woodland birds.

Several other related topics were presented; you may view the whole one-hour session at <http://sustainablefarms.org.au/fielddays/webinar-choughs-noisy-miners-and-boosting-bird-diversity-farms>



Advice is about the Australian bird of the honeyeater family, *Meliphagidae*, endemic to eastern and south-eastern Australia. It is a grey bird, with a black head, orange-yellow beak and feet, a distinctive yellow patch behind the eye and white tips on the tail feathers; not to be confused with the unrelated Indian/Asian/common myna, a bird of about the same size and mostly brown, but not native to Australia.

These birds have different calls to indicate different threats, and Aboriginal hunters used the raptor alarm call to bring high flying ducks down to within their range.

In 1865, John Gould published his “Handbook to the Birds of Australia” and wrote that the noisy miner “frequents thinly timbered forests of Eucalypti... rather than the dense brushes...” and “moves about in small companies of from four to ten...”

Whilst it is a honeyeater and adapted to foraging in flowers, 75% of its diet is small insects. Many Australian birds are aggressive in defending their nests but, in common with other honeyeaters, the miners also defend their resources. However, instead of doing it singly on a particular tree, noisy miners work in a group to defend a whole territory.

Land clearing has benefited big carnivorous birds and grain eaters, who can stand up to attacks. But the losers are small birds: Yellow robin, Superb fairy wren, Yellow Thornbill, Rufous whistler and others already threatened due to loss of habitat.

How did we get here, and what should we do?

In the first 150 years since European settlement of Australia, there has been a massive amount of land clearing. And in the 50 years since, even more clearing has happened than in the first 150. This has left lots of cleared land with a scattering of trees, forming perfect noisy miner habitat... so they move in and defend this new territory, effectively removing other birds.

Suggested remedies, to support threatened small woodland birds and discourage miners, include:

- Managing existing woodland remnants
- Adding shrubs
- Retain and protect paddock trees (to form wildlife corridors)
- Including small native shrubs when replanting an area

Once there is a thick cover of shrubs, it becomes not worth the noisy miners' effort to try to chase out every bird inhabiting that area.

Whilst the advice given in the webinar was focused on sustainable farming, similar action in urban areas should at least reduce the decline in small bird numbers.

DA FOR BORONIA PARK SPORTS FACILITY: WRONG BUILDING, WRONG PLACE!

The Development Application (DA) to construct a 'Sports & Community Facility' within heritage-listed Boronia Park reserve has been on public exhibition. Submissions are now being reviewed by an Independent Assessor, required because Hunters Hill Council is the proponent. The Assessor's report will then go to the Local Planning Panel for determination.

There was significant objection to construction of this facility which has been a long term ambition for the Rugby Club (HHRUFC). Concerns include the location, scale and building design selected by the Club, with full support from Council and receipt of two government grants totaling \$1.5million. Both grants remain the subject of inquiry into probity issues. \$1m came to Council from NSW Stronger Communities Fund and \$500,000 to the Rugby Club directly from the Federal 'sports rorts' grants, via Trent Zimmerman MP, a Patron of the Club.

Many in the community, including our Society, consider there is no need or justification for this oversized building in a narrow location between Ovals 1 & 2 where there are now four mature, healthy Eucalypts. Their removal will permanently and detrimentally impair the existing natural character and amenity of the freely available open space much appreciated by park users, visitors and residents for recreation and major events such as Moocooboola.



The four healthy Eucalypts to be removed

– photo by courtesy of Hunters Hill Trust

Not only will heat mitigation benefits be lost but at this stage there is no inclusion of renewable energy for air conditioning (windows will need to stay shut to reduce noise!). Floor-to-ceiling glass in the upper storey will increase need for aircon and also poses a real risk of bird strike. Glass strike accounts for 4% of the injuries and deaths of Powerful Owls and kills an estimated 1.7 million birds p.a. nationally. Native wildlife, including Powerful Owls, will also be impacted by the changed land use, night disturbance, light spill and loss of tree canopy.

The process to revise the Boronia Park Plan of Management (PoM) has enabled this Sports facility to proceed in this location. The draft 2020 PoM proposed four sites and the one most preferred by the local community, as reported by the independent consultant and recommended in the 2015 PoM, was adjacent to the historic grandstand, due to be upgraded using the \$1m grant, as outlined in the Funding Agreement titled '*Upgrade of Boronia Park grandstand and sporting fields*' signed off by the previous General Manager and the Office of Local Government.

A modest additional building, adjacent to the grandstand, could satisfy the HHRUFC's wish for a Clubhouse and provide the improved facilities needed due to increase sporting participation by women and girls. However, Hunters Hill Council rejected this option and chose to ignore restoration of the grandstand. They designated the total amount of \$1.5m to the HHRUFC to construct the building of their choice at a site they chose. In order to build to a grander scale the Club then committed to doubling this amount through donations. There is no transparency about the donors or whether the \$1.5m has been successfully raised.

Under pressure, Council publicly committed that no cash contribution would be made, other than the provision of staff time and assistance with design and development planning, calculated at approximately \$100,000. The Business Case for this facility states that: *'The Agreement for Licence includes conditions precedence which prevents construction of the building commencing prior to fundraising targets being met'*.

In promoting the building as a Sports & Community Facility', Council failed to provide a Needs Analysis for a new community meeting space and no unmet demand has been expressed by residents. The needs of the Rugby Club can be met by a single storey building. So there is no requirement for two storeys or justification for constructing to the dimensions proposed: 515 square metres footprint and a design visually presenting as a dark bulk across core parkland (even exceeding the generous 450 sqm set out in the PoM).

If approved, this facility will have a permanent effect on the ecological, social and scenic values of Boronia Park, creating noise and light disturbance with direct adverse consequence for the immediate neighbourhood and wildlife. It will impact local native fauna habitat corridors which link to the Field of Mars Wildlife Refuge and Lane Cove National Park.

It would inequitably favour the Hunters Hill Rugby Club, with almost exclusive use of both the building and all three sports fields under the long term Licence Agreement entered into with Council. **We hope we can rely on the Local Planning Panel to reject this contentious proposal.**

ARTIFICIAL TURF LIVES ON...?!

Concerns about artificial turf are explained in page 4 of the August 2021 edition of Wallumetta.

1. Bob Campbell Oval, Greenwich

Lane Cove Council received a \$3.6 million grant from the NSW government to provide facilities for the anticipated large growth in population. They want to go ahead with installing synthetic turf at Bob Campbell Oval in Greenwich despite strong opposition being expressed by local residents in a petition and at the council meeting.

In response to a letter of demand threatening legal proceedings issued on 12 June by solicitors for NG (Natural Grass) Inc, Lane Cove Council initially revoked its own environmental approval for its plans for Bob Campbell Oval, including the synthetic turf sports ground, and undertook not to rely further on this approval. It had failed to consider a number of significant environmental impacts.

However, Lane Cove Council recently reaffirmed its intention to install synthetic turf.

2. Gladesville Reserve

In Hunter's Hill Council, a decision in relation to Gladesville Reserve's \$2 million grant remains deferred until Minister Stokes' report materialises. In the meantime Henley residents have formed a group called Sustaining Gladesville Reserve to continue to oppose synthetic turf and create awareness of the many benefits of improved natural turf. The Society has encouraged them to also consider joining the Natural Turf Alliance, as we have done, to gain greater effectiveness and community support.

MACQUARIE PARK

Extra lanes will now be added in Lane Cove Road between Waterloo and Epping Roads, while work in Herring Road continues. Transport for NSW says that it is aiming to improve bus infrastructure. In its latest update - <https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/evolution-of-macquarie-park/index.html> - Transport for NSW states that Macquarie Park has:

- over 58,500 employees
- 40,200 students and 2,800 staff at Macquarie University
- 10,000 new homes planned over the next 20 years
- one of NSW's largest shopping centres.

Worryingly, these figures do not agree with those in the Macquarie Park Masterplan 20 year strategy as reported in Wallumetta August 2021, page 8.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE FIELD OF MARS

Damage caused by cemetery drainage works at the head of Creek 0 has been remediated. The pipe laid into the Reserve has been removed, and appropriate plantings have been done.

During lockdown, the tracks in the Reserve have carried increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Bicycles are causing significant track damage, but there is no clear signage at any entry point to indicate they are not allowed. A related issue is that not all visitors are sympathetic to the natural values and some areas of bush are being damaged. An unofficial track has appeared, leading downhill from the Sand Track just west of Cemetery Creek 2 - see photo:

The good news is that there are two new families of ducklings living in Buffalo Creek near the Visitor Centre.



Photo by Elli Tsiros

There are frequent sightings of swamp wallabies in various parts of the Reserve. Also sighted have been king parrots and magpie larks, along with the usual bird life.

And near the Westminster Road entrance, the bower bird has been busy!...

The bad news is that dog walkers persist in bringing their dogs through the reserve, despite the warning signs (some of which are often damaged or torn down but we keep replacing them); clearly the message of penalties and why dogs are excluded doesn't get through to some people.

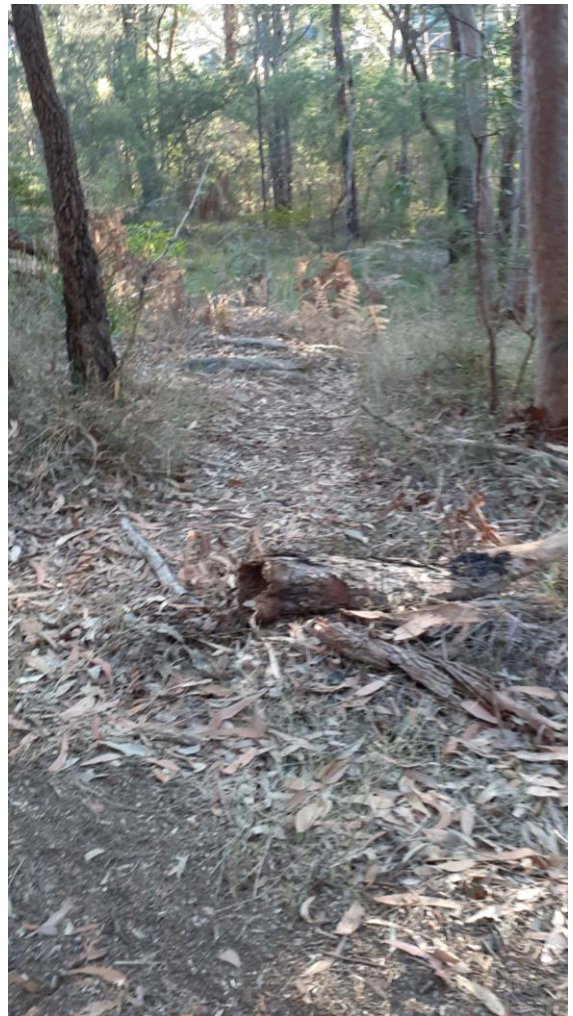


Photo by Valda Moses

PRYOR AND PORTIUS PARKS AND ALONG KITTY'S CREEK – VIGILANCE VALIDATED

In August 2021 the vigilance of local residents walking through Pryor Park from Cressy Road and Portius Park from Melba Drive East Ryde has resulted in reports being sent to City of Ryde Council.

Damage to the bushland due to tracks and jumps was observed indicating that restrictions on the riding of bicycles were being ignored. Initially, due to the current restrictive times and the need for young residents to engage in recreation, Council was prepared to allow activity on the grassed areas if it did not interfere with pedestrian traffic.

This changed dramatically in early September when persons were observed in the bushland towards the creek line with shovels, rakes, garden clippers and spades, all in vigorous use. The remediation and creek restoration project works completed by Council 18 months ago were severely compromised by this activity. Fortunately, staff acted promptly and erected signs to indicate camera use. The activity has not been observed since.

There is a need for mountain bike tracks in various areas of Ryde where industrious and adventurous youngsters have been active during lockdown. Council is investigating ways in which this may be satisfied with no damage to biodiversity. Similar initiatives are also being explored for the Hunters Hill Local Government Area.

REPORTING UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES

Members of the public do not always keep to the rules in using Wildlife Protection Areas and other public reserves, potentially causing harm to wildlife and diminished enjoyment for other users. Typical transgressions include walking dogs or riding bikes in areas where this is banned, removing or defacing Council notices, and even building unauthorised bike tracks in public reserves. If you see anything like this going on, please report it immediately to Council – phone 9952 8222. Take a photo if possible and send it by email to cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au or use the [Report an Issue](#) online form. If you wish to speak to the transgressors, we recommend you simply warn them politely that such activities are not allowed, that public reserves are patrolled by rangers and they may be liable to a fine.

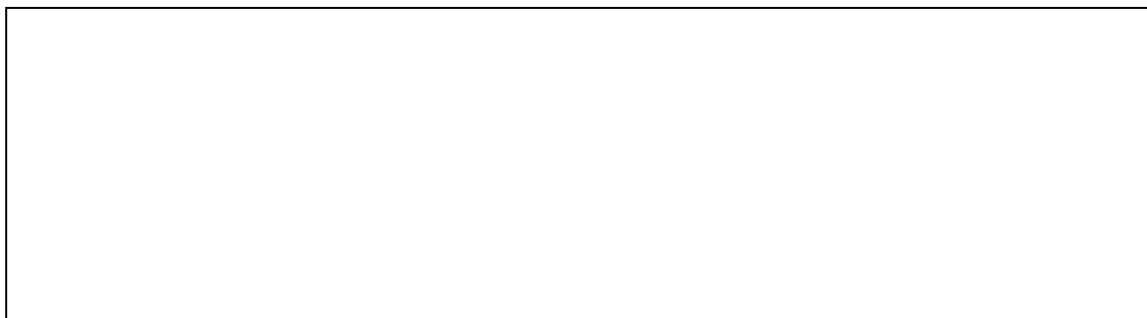
BUSHCARE

All sites were doing well until Lockdown began again, forcing cessation of volunteer workgroups... but the City of Ryde Spring Garden Competition is going ahead, and in the Bushcare Category we entered sites in the Field of Mars Reserve at Kennedy Street, Visitor Centre and Cemetery Creek 2.

VISITOR CENTRE – CLOSED DURING LOCKDOWN

We remained closed but hope to reopen soon, as restrictions ease.

INVITATION! - JOIN OUR VISITOR CENTRE TEAM! We have a small number of members on a roster of 4-hour shifts to keep the Visitor Centre open on weekends and public holidays. No specialised skills are required, but we need to be double-vaccinated. Alfred happily provides the small amount of training needed. Frequency and times of each person's shifts are negotiated individually according to preferences and availability. We look forward to providing this service again as restrictions allow, so we may continue to enhance community appreciation of the Field of Mars Reserve.



PAST EVENTS:

Over recent months, no Society events have been held owing to lockdown restrictions.

COMING EVENTS:

Sadly, the Kelly’s Bush celebration, previously postponed, is now to be an invitation-only event.

October is Bird Month, but our Society is not scheduling any special events until restrictions ease.

Depending on health orders, we plan to hold our usual members’ end-of-year get-together on the afternoon of Sunday 5 December, starting at 12 noon. We may organise an event in November too. As always, members will receive special prior notification of any events not in Wallumetta.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE AT THE END OF THE YEAR!

Typically, payments and donations from members account for 30% of our total income, half of which is used to pay for our Society’s membership and support for other environmental organisations. Most remaining funds are used for our own operating expenses and insurance.

We invite you to renew your membership and consider making a donation towards your Society’s activities for 2022. All members may enjoy active involvement in our Society’s activities to support the protection of our natural environments both locally and beyond, and receive this “Wallumetta” newsletter.

See below for details of fees payable and payment methods.

And new members are always welcome!

Please pay by direct transfer to our Commonwealth Bank account: RHHFF PS INC GENERAL ACCOUNT 062171 - 0090 1574. Include your name in the transaction description; if joining email your name, address and phone number to rhffps@gmail.com

Alternatively, you may pay by cash or cheque: 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 - please print clearly:	

Win this bright Yarnknit rug!

Tickets \$2 each, or 3 for \$5

Tickets are available at the Field of Mars Visitor Centre... or you may transfer funds to our Commonwealth Bank account:



RHHFF PS INC GENERAL ACCOUNT 062171 - 0090 1574.

Put “Raffle” + your name in the comment and email rhffps@gmail.com with your name and phone contact so your tickets may be reserved.

Winning ticket will be drawn at our next Annual General Meeting.