



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. 298

FEBRUARY

2023

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

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

When we think about drivers of climate change, we usually think of fossil fuels in electricity, transport and industry. To keep global heating below 1.5 degrees, we will need not only to reduce emissions as much as possible, but also to take carbon out of the atmosphere.

There is currently only one proven technology for removing carbon from the atmosphere and that is protecting and growing plants, including forests, native grasslands, wetlands and natural seaweed forests. The good news is that this will also help to protect and restore our biodiversity and the natural environment.

Australia has cleared 104 million hectares of forest since 1788¹, so there is plenty to regrow.

In a world trying to reduce carbon emissions, Australia is the only developed country among the top 10 global deforestation hotspots². We rank alongside places like the Amazon, the Congo and Sumatra. When we log and clear forests we destroy stable carbon sinks³, create erosion and dust storms, undermine water systems and cause extinctions. This doesn't make any sense in a carbon constrained world.

Our dangerously high levels of land clearing are driven by agricultural practices, primarily beef production. Wood production drives the logging of native forests. Both are major sources of carbon emissions and drivers of extinction.

We need to protect the natural environment as a centre piece of the climate change response. With the NSW state election due 25 March it is time to scrutinise not only at the policies of the political parties in respect of the use of fossil fuels but also the policies concerning land clearing, logging and regeneration of our natural environment.

Frank Breen,

President

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1 Bradshaw CJA, 2012, Little left to lose: deforestation and forest degradation in Australia since European colonisation, Journal of Plant Ecology, Vol 5, Issue 1

2 WWF Deforestation fronts: Drivers and responses in a changing world, 2021

3 If trees that are logged are used for high value, long term items, like rocking chairs or violins, their carbon remains stored in those new objects.

COMING EVENTS

LANE COVE ELECTION CAMPAIGN TRAINING - FROM NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL (NCC)

Our efforts can make a huge difference in the coming NSW state election on 25 March 2023. The NCC believes in the strength and power of collective action. So we must work together and make sure nature and climate are key campaign issues for all candidates.

Nature is in crisis. Koalas face extinction, carbon emissions are still rising, and inland rivers are disastrously mismanaged. By working together, electorate by electorate, we can change the trajectory that NSW is currently on. However, our movement is only as strong as our energy and commitment.

For this election, we are focusing our energy on particular electorates where a strong campaign is most likely to have a bigger impact on the environmental and climate policies of particular political parties, and Lane Cove is one of them. We know that some of the key issues in the Lane Cove electorate include urban bushland being under threat, as well as sensitive ecosystems. Canopy cover is reducing at an alarming rate, there is overdevelopment, all of which impacts on local wildlife and raising temperatures.

You're invited to join us for our free Lane Cove NCC Election Campaign Training, where we are bringing together supporters and like-minded people in the Lane Cove electorate specifically to discuss simple and effective ways that anyone can be involved in their community in the lead up to the election and contribute to a healthy, sustainable NSW. Details are as follows:

NCC Lane Cove Election Campaign Training 7-8pm Wednesday 1 February

(Cost: Free!) Location: Online via Zoom – click here to register and get your link:

[Election Campaign Training - Nature Conservation Council of NSW](#)

Also save the date for:

NSW Environment Leaders Forum (James Griffin MP, and others will be there)

6pm Wednesday 1st March at Sydney Town Hall... our biggest event of the election - a night where the environment leaders and spokespeople from main political parties will present and discuss their vision for the future that nature needs.

And then there are our own (RHHFFPS) Events:

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY – Sunday 5 March 2023, 10am-12pm



If you are interested in taking part in the Field of Mars site (for members only) – please contact our site coordinator Alfred on 02 9879 6067. Other sites may be found by checking the website <https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/>

ELECTION FORUMS AT FIELD OF MARS EDUCATION CENTRE - Saturday 18 March 2023

11.00am: Candidates for election to the **State Seat of Ryde** will be invited to present their environmental policies and respond to questions from the audience. Speakers will be time-limited so there will be time for questions, and the forum should conclude around 12.30pm.

Then, at 2.00pm, a similar forum will be held for candidates for election to the **Seat of Lane Cove**.

Between times (at 12.30pm) a salad lunch will be served for those who attend both.

Postponed to the next day: Sunday 19 March 2023: 2pm – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Annual reports will be presented, and elections will be held for our Management Committee for the coming year. We encourage Society members to consider joining our management team. Afterwards, we will have afternoon tea and the raffle prize-winning ticket will be drawn.

All welcome!

NEWS FROM AROUND THE FIELD OF MARS

VALE JOHN BOYLE (24 August 1941 – 26 November 2022)

A long-term Ryde resident, John was passionate about the environment and took action to preserve and protect it. John remained a committee member of our Society until his death.

At his recent funeral John's contribution to the Society and the environment more widely was acknowledged by our Society's President Frank Breen:

'John joined the Society in 2004 and from 2007 undertook Bushcare each month, under the auspices of Ryde Council, at Darvall Park and at the Field of Mars Reserve. John was also actively involved in many environmental campaigns such as the attempt to preserve the Moreton Bay fig trees near Moore Park.

'In March 2017 John was elected to the Management Committee of the Society. His contributions to the discussions of the committee were always well informed and well received. He supported events by assisting with activities on the day and in other roles as needed.

'In 2019 the constitution of our Society was reviewed and at our Annual General Meeting adopted an introductory statement in its Aims and Objectives. John was instrumental in this with the statement reflecting his concern for the natural environment and its original custodians – *"The aims and objectives of the Society shall include respect for the land, its original custodians and its flora and fauna."*

Anthony Papallo, a friend and long-time neighbour, termed John a professional advocate not only for the environment but also for human rights, the protection of whistle blowers and ratepayers wishing to improve their surroundings. He alluded to his interest in the political process shown through letterboxing, volunteering at polling booths on election days and acting as a scrutineer.

John taught Mathematics but was skilled in many areas including new technologies. He will be missed by his friends and colleagues in Ryde. The strength and wisdom of his endeavours and actions have been much appreciated by those who were fortunate enough to know him.



Although a vigorous campaigner and always willing to speak out on environmental issues, John was modest by nature and shied away from photographs. John is at the back with some fellow RHHFFPS committee members and volunteers.

WILDLIFE... AND FIRST AID ADVICE FOR TICK BITES

The abundance of animals in the Reserve includes insects, birds, lizards, possums, bandicoots, wallabies... and ticks, including *Ixodes holocyclus* – also called paralysis, grass, seed or bush tick. Reports are increasing, so walkers and bushcarers are advised to take care and consider using insect repellent. Symptoms of tick bites range from mild allergic reactions to severe anaphylaxis.

We keep First Aid equipment and treatments on hand at the Field of Mars Visitor Centre.

First Aid advice for tick bites is to use forceps to grip the tick right down at skin level, taking care not to squeeze more venom into the patient. Spraying the tick with repellent first might help to stun it, and make removal easier. The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI) recommend freezing the tick, using products such as Wart-Off, Tick-Off (which is the same product relabelled) or Elastoplast Cold Spray. These contain ether, which kills the tick by freezing. After-effects of a bite may be infection, rashes, headaches and/or fever; also various diseases may follow including ones that result in the patient being permanently allergic to red meat.

If in doubt, visit a doctor.

BUSHCARE

We recently requested reports on the work done by the bush regeneration contractors employed by the City of Ryde Council to manage areas not being intensively cared for by volunteers. Contractors are allocated bushland areas within specific catchments. Dragonfly Environmental is responsible for the Buffalo, Strangers and Kittys Creek catchments. 153 worker hours in total were spent at the Field of Mars Reserve in November:

Maintenance north and south of Wellington Rd, the old depot site, reveg area adjoining cemetery, along Strangers Creek, behind Education Centre, along Buffalo Creek, up to Westminster Rd steps, primary work at the edge of the Roving Bushcare Site (Cemetery Creek 1) and near the north eastern corner of the cemetery - treated weeds included ochra, lantana, privet and blackberry.

Meanwhile, the other volunteer bushcare sites around the reserve are being well looked after with regular sessions except when the weather is too wet or windy for our safety. At Cemetery Creek 2, work continues clearing up the area damaged by the excavator. A weed has appeared, previously unknown in Field of Mars: *Soliva sessilis* (bindi weed or burrweed). We believe it was introduced by the tyres of the excavator, and bushcarers are making a concerted effort to eradicate it before it spreads to other parts of the Reserve, with burrs attaching themselves to shoes and bike tyres.

New members are welcome in all our teams – phone the City of Ryde Council on 9952 8222 and tell them you would like to volunteer. All necessary training is provided on-the-job.

VISITOR CENTRE

During the warm summer days over Christmas, visitor numbers dropped considerably. We believe this is a result of the desire by many to go travelling again, and increased willingness to visit shopping centres for pre- and post-Christmas shopping. Our Visitor Centre is, nevertheless, a good place to be in summer, with temperatures in Buffalo Creek valley usually lower than elsewhere.

Street Library for Nature Books is a recent addition to the Visitor Centre, and it is already popular! The idea was mooted at one of our committee meetings and, after it was made for us by East Ryde Cub Scouts, we installed it with permission from City of Ryde Council.



Recently, members Marilyn and Michele joined our Visitor Centre team, and are very welcome! **CAN YOU JOIN OUR VISITOR CENTRE TEAM?** We keep the Visitor Centre open 9am-5pm on weekends and public holidays. Our roster of 4-hour shifts is negotiated according to members' availability. No specialised skills are required, and Alfred happily provides the training needed. Most visitors' questions are answered in the maps and range of free leaflets we have available.

And when no people are around you have the pleasure of the company of local wildlife including ducks, turkeys, kookaburras and more recently a young currawong. It's a great place to be!

HUNTER'S HILL COUNCIL SUPPORTS CONTROVERSIAL DEVELOPMENT IN BORONIA PARK

Report published in TWT 21.12.22, page 5

The controversial proposed Boronia Park Sport and Community Centre received the support of the majority of Hunter's Hill Councillors during Monday night's (19.12.22) council meeting.

The two storey centre to be located next to Oval One is designed to be used for a range of council, community and sports groups and will be leased as a clubhouse to the Hunters Hill Rugby Club during winter.

Councillors voted five to one in favour of it - with Cir Ross Williams (Independent) voting against it and Cir Jim Sanderson (Independent) abstaining - with councillor endorsement to spend around \$1.7 million dollars in ratepayers' money on it despite previous assurances by councillors it wouldn't cost the community a cent.

Community speakers opposed the use of public money on a so-called "rugby clubhouse" which will be financed from the council's Unrestricted Reserve fund of around ten million dollars.

Ratepayer Heather Armstrong described the proposed expenditure as "a disgrace" and told councillors it is a "completely irresponsible" misuse of community money at a time when the council has raised rates to afford to repair roads and footpaths.

"The licence agreement gives the rugby club exclusive rights and privilege and it doesn't sound like a community facility," she said.

Rugby Club spokesman Glen Sanford said the centre needs to be built straight away to meet the conditions of more than a million dollars in government grants while Gladesville Ravens Club spokesperson Cathy Inglis stressed her members would use the facility for training.

The Hunters Hill Trust unsuccessfully proposed the building be reduced to one storey.

Some ratepayers have previously questioned whether or not an option to spend their money on the project had been decided during a recent "secret session" of council although General Manager Mitchell Murphy and Mayor Zac Miles stressed that no expenditure had been approved at a confidential meeting and the council had acted with openness, transparency and due process at all times.

Councillor Williams said council funding in the Unrestricted Reserve had come from the sale of the Gladesville car park and the council had a duty to invest that money on other revenue raising opportunities.

Independent Cir Richard Quinn voted in favour of the Centre. "I was always uncomfortable that this council was building a facility we weren't contributing towards," he said.

"We're now spending money on and for our community and that is what we have reserves for."

Deputy Mayor Elizabeth Krassoi said she would have preferred to have the Centre built without cost to ratepayers but argued that building cost increases had made this option unrealistic.

"In five years' time people will wonder why there has been such a furore about this," she said.

Work could be completed next year.

OFF LEASH DOG PARKS IN THE CITY OF RYDE

Pidding Park

At its meeting on Tuesday 13 December 2022, the City of Ryde Council resolved to expand the designated Dog Off-Leash Area in Pidding Park to include the senior and junior sport fields in compliance with the Companion Animal Act 1998. The off leash area will remain an off-leash area when not in use for organized sporting activities booked by Council.

Funding to implement the original recommended changes to the off leash area at Pidding Park will be considered for inclusion in future iterations of Council's Four Year Delivery Plan.

There will be a 12 month trial of unfenced, off leash dog areas in three parks in the City of Ryde.

Councillors Penny Pedersen, Bernard Purcell and Charles Song voted against the trial but are not opposed to the safe use of off leash dog areas. The trials will be held in Warrawong Reserve in Eastwood, Brereton Park in East Ryde and Fontenoy Park in Macquarie Park.

Councillor Pedersen expressed concern about dog attacks on children and wants to see the playground at Fontenoy Park fenced off.

Council staff are currently reviewing the feasibility of six other proposed dog off leash areas.

GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK – SIGN THE PETITION!

There is a petition calling for the establishment of this park and the logging within the park to be halted. If 20,000 signatures are secured, the petition can be tabled for debate in the NSW parliament. Text of the petition is:

“To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly,

“We draw your attention to the significant decline in the NSW Koala population. There were an estimated 54,000 wild koalas in NSW in 2012, by 2016 the NSW Chief Scientist estimated only 36,000 were left. The 2019/20 bushfires destroyed over a quarter of remaining prime Koala habitat in northeast NSW and killed approximately 10,000 koalas in NSW. Many koala populations are now on the verge of collapse.

“The 2020 NSW Upper House Koala inquiry found that NSW koalas will become extinct before 2050 without urgent government intervention. Habitat loss and fragmentation through logging, land clearing and bushfires, are the primary cause of the koala's decline. Koalas in NSW are now listed as Endangered. The only way to prevent their predicted extinction is to stop the loss of koala habitat by protecting it in perpetuity.

“The Great Koala National Park (GKNP) would protect an estimated 20% of NSW's remaining koalas. It would also generate significant regional economic benefits through nature-based tourism and is well supported by the community. Current industrial scale logging in State Forests within the proposed GKNP is destroying the very habitat critical to ensuring Koala survival. We respectfully request that:

- 1. A moratorium be placed on all logging of public native forest within the National Parks Association of NSW's proposed Great Koala National Park.*
- 2. That koalas be protected for future generations by immediately creating The Great Koala National Park as proposed by the National Parks Association of NSW.”*

To sign this petition, go to: <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/la/pages/epetition-details.aspx?q=xWiyh7QOALBaYGLc6X91XQ>

Closing date is 11 April 2023.

AUSTRALIA ALREADY AT “WORST CASE” CLIMATE SCENARIOS FOR 2030

Abridged from a report by Matthew Agius, published by Cosmos 12 December 2022

Data analysis by world-renowned climate scientist Professor David Karoly shows a concerning trend. Australia appears to be already experiencing the worst-case climate scenarios that were projected to occur eight years from now.



Smoky sunrise over the Field of Mars Reserve, 21 November 2019... and Buffalo Creek in flood 19 March 2021:

David Karoly presented data titled “*Evaluation of near-term climate change projections for selected Australian cities using recent observations*” at the recent Australian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society conference.

It was an analysis of how closely projections released in 2015 by the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO align to actual temperatures and rainfall experienced by 12 major Australian cities.



According to Professor Karoly, things like temperature, and the decline in rainfall in southern Australia, were tracking at or above what was projected for the 2030s.

Climate models simulate plausible climate futures:

They are the most accurate and useful tools available to anticipate and estimate the Earth’s future climate, and extend the calculations used by meteorologists to predict short-term weather. So, climate projections look beyond this week, this month and even this year.

These models use complex data inputs and mathematical calculations to simulate possible climate outcomes. To give a sense of the effort to ensure accuracy, hundreds of scientists and substantial supporting resources are required to build a model.

Climate futures are uncertain, and scientists are quick to emphasise there are many variables that will influence the climate. But these uncertainties are small, and have become smaller and smaller as the reliability of climate models has improved.

Once models are verified, they’re then used to project forward scenarios.

In simple terms, this process is repeated by climate scientists around the world to inform decision-makers, businesses and individuals on what changes might look like years into the future.

“In the most recent decade, it’s hitting us faster and harder.”

GREAT BARRIER REEF SHOULD BE ADDED TO UNESCO 'IN DANGER' LIST

Article by Matthew Agius, published by Cosmos, 29 November 2022

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF IS IN DANGER

That's the expert recommendation from a Reactive Monitoring Mission to UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization – conducted in March 2022.

Multiple attempts to add the Reef to the world heritage 'in danger' list have been avoided previously, most recently in 2021 due to intense lobbying by the Australian government.

Despite avoiding a formal 'inscription' onto the *List of World Heritage in Danger* then, the findings outlined in this new joint report by scientists from the World Heritage Centre (WHC) and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) points to a dire situation in a reef beset by regular coral bleaching event, ocean heatwaves and changes in biodiversity.

Broader climate change outlooks predict annual mass bleaching events within twenty years, as well as increasing ocean acidification, and the WHC/IUCN report makes 22 recommendations it believes could "ensure and advance the conservation [of the reef] and its outstanding universal value for future generations".

Among high priority recommendations related to on-shore agricultural and water management practices, vegetation protection and water quality management, it calls for an end to gill net fishing in the reef, strengthening legal protections for land vegetation in nearby catchments, and the existing reef plan with clear commitments to cut carbon emissions "consistent with the efforts required to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels".

UNESCO evaluation critical of Australia strategy

The decision to formally inscribe the reef on the world heritage "in danger" list can only be made by UNESCO's world heritage committee, which is next due to convene in 2023.

The current environment minister Tanya Plibersek and special envoy for the Great Barrier Reef Nita Green emphasised this point in their joint statement addressing the report.

But while the report is not capable of enforcing a formal 'in danger' listing, it nevertheless is a confronting scientific assessment that effectively confirms the reef's grim outlook.

The February 2022 report submitted to UNESCO by the former Australian government emphasised its commitments to improving water quality, and the focus of the responding to climate change, and helping communities, industries and ecosystems adapt to the climate challenge.

But the WHC/IUCN mission found that while state and federal governments had, at the time, ramped up climate mitigation efforts, **plans lacked detail or clear pathways on how net zero targets would be achieved.**

The mission report was prepared prior to the change of government that has since resulted in a legislated carbon reduction target. Even so, the report emphasises the need for accelerated implementation of measures in the existing plan.

"We're barrelling towards warming scenarios that are going to be devastating for 99% of reefs worldwide, let alone our prized and iconic Great Barrier Reef," James Cook University professor in marine biology Jodie Rummer told *Cosmos*.

... + Comment from The Greens:

The Morrison Liberal Government ferociously lobbied against scientific advice from UNESCO that the Great Barrier Reef be placed on the 'in danger' list because of the impact of climate change...

The question is now: will the Albanese Government do the same, or will it take the necessary climate action to meet UNESCO’s recommendations to avoid an ‘in danger’ listing? It’s not going to be enough for the Albanese Government to merely accept scientific advice on whether the Great Barrier Reef should be declared in danger of climate change, it must urgently act to meet our Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees.

Sadly [the recent State of the Climate report](#) shows Australia’s climate has almost reached this critical threshold set out by the Paris Agreement, and we know Labor’s emission reduction target of 43% by 2030 directly equates to 2 degrees of warming.

Labor is also pushing ahead with 114 new coal, oil and gas projects right around Australia, each of which is a nail in the coffin for the Reef.

NATIONAL FERAL DEER ACTION PLAN - Consultation closes 20 March 2023

A deer plague has already taken over most natural areas on the east coast, including farmland and open spaces around the Sydney metropolitan area. Scientists predict that without action, feral deer will spread west from the Great Dividing Range and invade every habitat in Australia.

Now, the **Invasive Species Council** reports that we have a national, coordinated and systematic approach to controlling feral deer on the table. The draft [National Feral Deer Action Plan](#) is a huge win because it outlines a concerted effort of both state and federal governments to beat this massive threat to our World Heritage areas, our national parks and to nature.

Our Society supports the work of the Invasive Species Council which has been a driving force behind the plan. They won a senate inquiry, gained a national deer coordinator, and now have a plan to stop alarming numbers of feral deer spreading across the country.

Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Cox, will be looking at ways the draft plan can be strengthened, to get a final plan adopted, resourced and implemented. He says it’s ambitious, but it’s needed:

“This nationally coordinated, systematic approach is exactly what nature needs everywhere. Such a response is what we will be fighting for early next year during the review of Australia’s environmental laws. Just as we’ve had a breakthrough with deer, we also need a breakthrough in this system that protects nature.”

INDUSTRY INITIATIVE TO HELP AUSTRALIANS GARDEN RESPONSIBLY

The Gardening Responsibly initiative was officially launched in NSW with the aim of reducing the number of ornamental plants that “jump the garden fence” and become invasive weeds.

[Gardening Responsibly](#) is the result of five years of hard work and collaboration between the NSW Government, Australian Institute of Horticulture, Nursery and Garden Industry NSW & ACT, Macquarie University, and many others, and is set to be a game-changer. It brings together all stakeholders involved in the ornamental plant trade, including government, industry, growers, suppliers, landscapers and consumers, to ensure ornamental plants with a low likelihood of becoming invasive weeds are promoted and sold by nurseries and suppliers. As a result, the initiative hopes to jump-start a [Gardening Responsibly movement](#), where everyone plays their part, from suppliers to consumers.

The initiative will first pilot in NSW and then be rolled out nationally in the coming years. In NSW, there are already a number [of participating nurseries, suppliers and landscapers](#) promoting Gardening Responsibly and using the Gardening Responsibly eco-label:



DRIVE TO BRING ELECTRIC VEHICLES TO REGIONAL AUSTRALIA REVS UP

From an article published in Cosmos by Jamie Seidel, a SA freelance journalist.

A network of fast-charge stations is being installed on 6600km of West Australian roads. And a new generation of utility trucks hopes to put them to work.

Regional Australia has long been leery of the electrification trend. Can these cars, trucks and buses go far enough, fast enough? And where are all the roadhouses offering a refill of electrons anyway? Now, in 2022, the technology has proven itself.

And the infrastructure and supply side of things is catching up.

A \$43.5 million project initiated by the WA government aims to link “the world’s most isolated city” with remote mining, fishing, agriculture and tourism hotspots through an “[EV Highway](#)”.

Dandenong-based SEA Electric and Brendale-based Ausev hope to hitch a ride on this significant infrastructure investment.

Brisbane’s Tritium DCFC <https://www.tritium.com.au/> will be one of the suppliers of 98 modular fast-charge stations installed across 49 different road stops positioned no more than 200km apart. These 15-minute rechargers will stretch from Perth north to Kununurra, south to Esperance and east to Kalgoorlie. **The network is expected to be fully operational by 2024.**

“Western Australia is a state with vast unpopulated distances, and governments have a role to play supporting highway electrification in rural and remote areas where site utilisation may not be profitable for private sector operators,” says Tritium CEO Jane Hunter.

While [electric cars] appeared in metropolitan Australia, their relevance to regional Australia remains limited. Something of greater utility is needed to get the electric vehicle ball rolling.

And now electric trucks, pickups, utes and four-wheel-drives are poised to take their place on country roads. Not to mention in and around the new mining and processing facilities producing the raw materials needed for modern batteries and electric motors.

The BossCap group <https://bosscap.com.au/about-us/> in Queensland aims to remanufacture up to 1000 US-sourced Ram and Ford trucks and utilities each year to Australian standards.

It began by converting the EV Ford F150, among others. Now it builds its own Australia-optimised bodies under its [Ausev](#) brand on imported electric vehicle chassis. “We see an opportunity in electric trucks which are already very popular in the Australian market – it looks like being a very long time before supplies of EV trucks get here,” says BossCap managing director Eddie Kocwa.

[SEA Electric](#) also recognises this opportunity, doubling its solar-powered assembly facility in Dandenong, Melbourne, to enable a production rate of eight electric heavy vehicles per day.

“We have attracted incredible interest from a wide cross-section of leading companies and government bodies, who seek to improve their environmental sustainability, despite a lack of policy and incentives to fuel growth in the sector on these shores,” CEO Tony Fairweather says. “The recent change of Federal Government and subsequent increase in EV activity, has provided SEA Electric with renewed confidence that appropriate policy and incentives may be close.”

RISKY BUSINESS: How Australia's banks and super funds are responding to the nature crisis

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) reported on how well Australia's financial sector responds to environmental considerations. To read the report and its recommendations, see https://assets.nationbuilder.com/auscon/pages/21338/attachments/original/1670283691/Risky_business_WEB.pdf?1670283691

Here are the key findings:

1. Banks and super funds are feeling moderate to intense pressure from some stakeholders to consider nature in their business activities, but very little pressure from Australian financial regulators.
2. Banks and super funds agree that nature is relevant to their organisations, and that they have a responsibility to understand the risks and opportunities it brings.
3. Banks and super funds are taking a backseat when it comes to engaging in nature related initiatives and frameworks.
4. 50% of banks and 70% super funds have not evaluated nature related impacts or dependencies.
5. Despite the overwhelming recognition by banks and super funds that nature destruction is a risk that demands their attention, just three organisations — Future Super, Australian Super and NAB — indicated they had assessed such risks and opportunities, and only 40% plan to.
6. Responses to nature-related target setting by both banks and super funds reveals an inadequacy that is dangerously out of touch with the reality of the nature crisis. 90% of super funds and 80% of banks indicated have not set nature-related targets, and an abysmal 20% say they plan to. No net zero claim can be considered to have integrity if it doesn't include a target to end deforestation by 2025. And no emissions calculation is complete if it doesn't account for land-use change. This means that Australia's big four banks and largest super funds have a lot to answer for when using preoccupation with setting climate targets as an excuse for inaction on nature.
7. Australian Ethical is the only super fund with a deforestation and land conversion policy, while four banks: Bank Australia, HSBC, Rabobank and Bendigo & Adelaide Bank also have one. No bank or super fund surveyed has a policy on biodiversity offsets and just 50% have a carbon offset policy.
8. Despite not having nature-related targets in place, many banks and super funds are making direct investments in nature through impact funds, loans and other financial instruments.

OUR NEW BANK ACCOUNT: a note from the treasurer...

Astute members and readers of Wallumetta noticed that we changed our banking to Bendigo Bank. The decision to do this was made last year at the suggestion of members concerned that we should support financial institutions that make ethical investments. See point 7 above.

Our Commonwealth Bank account remains open for now, but will be closed later this year.

We opened our Society Cheque Account with the Commonwealth Bank at Gladesville since we began in 1966. In those days it was easy to access the account in several bank branches, post offices and agencies. I have fond memories of banking with the late Ernie Heatly, whose East Ryde hardware store was an agency back in the 1960s and '70s. But times have changed.

Many organisations – government and private – no longer accept cheques and expect to be paid by electronic funds transfer instead. We made efforts to enable this, but have not been able to do so with our existing account. Moreover, many local bank branches have closed: two at North Ryde, and now also Gladesville.

We believe Bendigo Bank conducts its business in an ethical, nature-friendly manner. And it also has branches conveniently located for some committee members including myself. With our Bendigo account it is a simple process to make payments by electronic funds transfer.

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all members who have already renewed your annual membership of our Society and welcome to those who joined recently! You may be interested to know that our membership numbers have started to grow again over the past few years, now exceeding 90.

Members who have not yet renewed for 2023 will receive a reminder when this newsletter is published. *If you do not receive a reminder:* thank you! - you are already paid up for 2023.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

Please pay by direct transfer to our Bendigo 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

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 YARNKNIT* RUG
IN COOL NATURAL COLOURS!**

Tickets \$2 each / 3 for \$5 - at the Visitor Centre...



or pay to Bendigo Bank account: RYDE HUNTERS HILL FLORA AND FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC, BSB 633-000, Account number 190716589.

Put "Raffle" + your name and phone number in the comment, and we will then make the tickets for you.

Proceeds support the work of our Society. The winning ticket will be drawn at our Society's next Annual General Meeting.

* This new rug was handknitted and kindly donated by members of the Holy Spirit Yarnknit Group.

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