



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW
protecting nature through community action

PRINT
POST
100003282

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

NEWSLETTER NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC No 117
Special Spring edition
SOUTHERN SYDNEY BRANCH

If undeliverable return to:
PO Box 312, Engadine, NSW 2233

PRESIDENT: Brian Everingham
SECRETARY: Gary Schoer
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Brian Everingham
phone/fax 95209341
Send copy to brian.everingham@gmail.com
ISSUE: Spring 2016 Part 2

In This Issue:

- Branch AGM and member nights
- Campaign news – land clearing
- Maianbar's shorebirds
- Marine Protection

BUSINESS MEETINGS All are welcome to attend, have your say and hear what's happening in the NPA. Contact Peter on 95287341 or Gary on 95701813 for details. Held on the 3rd Thursday of alternate months.

BRANCH MEETINGS: Come and meet other members from your local area, new members and friends are most welcome. These meetings are organised for you, are informal, informative and relaxing. An interesting evening is guaranteed and supper is provided.

The venue for Branch meetings is the Multi-Purpose Centre, 123 Flora St Sutherland (near Belmont St) 3 minutes walk from the railway station and with plenty of parking. All meetings commence at 8.00pm.

Our Branch

On September 28th the Branch will hold its next member evening. This will also be our AGM at which our Executive is elected. Please do not be shy in putting yourself forward. While I am very pleased with the commitment of our entire team it is always good to have new volunteers, new activists and new voices.

Elections will be held for the following positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Hon Secretary
- Minutes Secretary
- Hon Treasurer
- State Council delegates (four positions)

And it would be great if there are volunteers who can help by becoming the Newsletter editor, help in webpage design, help as campaign volunteers. None of these positions need be elected. Just come along and say what you would like to do. We'll listen!!! Truly. Or, if you prefer, give me a call.

Brian Everingham, Branch President
Brian.everingham@gmail.com or 02 952092341

Members Evenings 2016

28 Sept "The story of Thomas Cook and the development of modern tourism". Founded in 1841 Thomas Cook Travel recently celebrated its 175th anniversary. Guest speaker Gerald Davis will highlight the fascinating history and achievements of one of the world's great pioneering travel companies

3 Nov "To Tropical North Queensland by Campervan and 4WD truck"

Gary Schoer will share his experiences of birds and other beasts, aboriginal culture and remote national parks on an 8 week journey through some of the most isolated and stunning landscapes in Australia. Anyone contemplating a trip through this region will pick up hints on what to see and do and how to be safe where many potential hazards occur, all of which are manageable. Gary is a keen Canon photographer and always tries to get "the shot" of challenging subjects.

The NPA offers members over 1000 free midweek and weekend activities a year including bush walks, canoe trips, bike rides, biodiversity surveys, bird watching, and family trips. Activities cater for all levels of fitness. Easy/short walks, day bushwalks, overnight bushwalks, week bushwalks, educational walks, conservation work.

8pm Sutherland Multi-Purpose Centre

123 Flora St Sutherland (near Belmont St)

Admission Free All Welcome

CAMPAIGN AND ON GROUND ACTIONS UPDATE

This is a special E-Edition of Southern Sydney Branch Newsletter which reports on specific NSW Government commitments to two special initiatives:

1. Revision of the laws that affect land clearing controls, threatened vegetation conservation and biodiversity loss offsetting arrangements.
2. The development of “new approaches” to marine biodiversity conservation...especially how that relates to the still unprotected marine waters in the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion between Newcastle and Wollongong.

Your branch was disgusted to learn of the clearing of 1.4 hectares of critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark forest as a temporary plant storage Westconnex facility near Wolli Creek that can never be restored to its original state. NPA member, Gary Schoer wrote a letter to the Sydney Morning Herald on 9/9/2016 criticising the compensation promised by Environment Minister Mark Speakman:

I thought Mark Speakman as a former Barrister would appreciate how to use evidence far better than he displays in justifying the clearing of 1.4 hectares of critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark forest (Murder, bloody murder; a cry for ironbark.8/9/160) How can he possibly say that this loss will be offset by protection of other forest? The argument that there is still plenty to save falls down when one considers that 93% of original forest has already been lost...and what manipulation of evidence contributed to the present “endangered” status of this community? No, Mr Speakman, 5-1 does not equal 5 despite the weasel words used to justify this Clayton’s offsetting of yet more irreversible loss of the state’s natural assets.

Even worse logic pervades the intended changes to native vegetation clearance, threatened species and biodiversity legislation in rural areas. Peak Environmental bodies walked out of discussions with the NSW government as these changes were being negotiated due to insurmountable differences met while seeking some common ground. Paying for vegetation clearing rights when like for like offsets are not available is one such strategy that may appear in the new legislation.

In the last Branch newsletter we asked of local Liberal MP for Oatley, Mark Coure: *We would like to hear from you what actions you have taken based on page 8, and your position on the proposed legislative changes related to biodiversity conversation. We will communicate your actions to members by the end of September.*

Mark Coure who has spoken up publicly supporting a new Marine Park for Sydney has (so far) responded via his Electorate Assistant”

“Thank you for your email (and newsletter article GS) to Mark regarding Biodiversity Legislation.

Mark has asked me to pass onto you that he appreciates your thoughts and will consider them carefully when debating the legislation.

Mark has met with a number of groups and people regarding the legislation and is taking some time to consider the issues.

While we await action by this government we note that scientists are concerned:

“Australia is reverting to "a frontier mentality", with rising rates of deforestation lifting carbon emissions and placing at risk almost 2000 species including the country's iconic koala populations, scientists say.

NSW is where scientists are especially worried, with proposed changes "likely to greatly increase the amount of deforestation and loss of habitat", Martine Maron, from the University of Queensland, said. "There's a great concern that biodiversity is going to take a hit."

Koalas are one species under threat, with "precipitous" falls in colony populations of as much as 80 per cent in parts of NSW and Queensland, Professor Maron said.

The marsupials are "really quite susceptible" to climate change as habitats shrink, as are dozens of other species, she said. "The path we are on is utterly unsustainable."

As tree cover shrinks, salinity and soil loss worsen while local droughts can be made worse. The vegetation culling also runs contrary to federal programs such as efforts to plant 20 million trees and state moves to pay for the protection of threatened species, Professor Kingsford said."

Ref: <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/utterly-unsustainable-scientists-warn-koalas-at-risk-as-bulldozers-let-loose-20160707-gq0fjh.html>



Maianbar's shorebirds need their neighbours to share the beach

Deeban Spit is home to many migratory and resident shorebirds. Some say the birds should find somewhere with less people but they were here before us. It is a sad fact that shorebird habitat is declining all along our coastlines as people continue to move into their space. For them to survive we need to learn how to share.

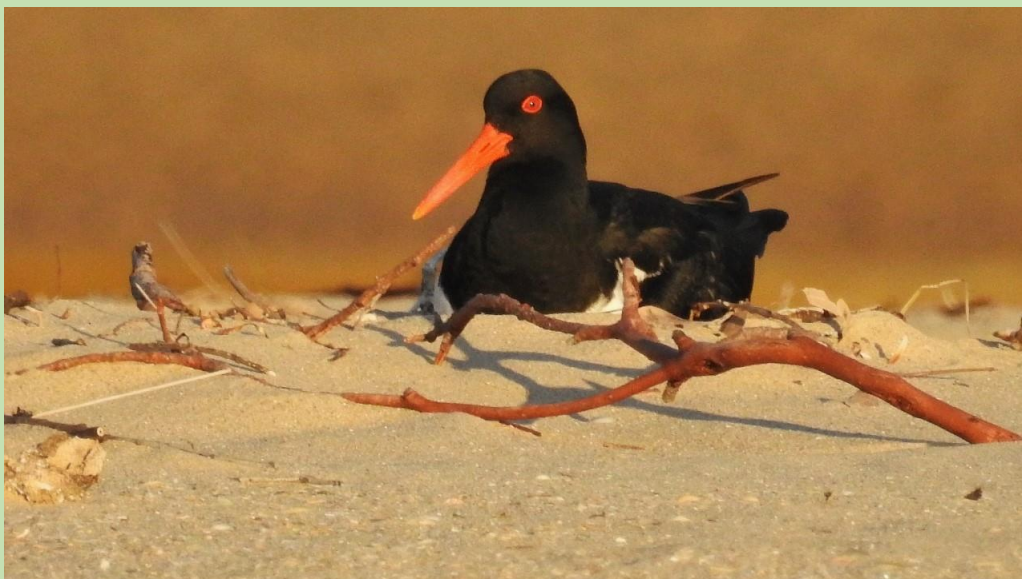
As good neighbours we should:

- Not go inside a fence line set up on a beach designed to protect nesting shorebirds. Eggs are well camouflaged so are easy to step on.
- Not chase or disturb flocks of birds. If you see them ahead please cross to the other shoreline.
- Walk past a fence line quickly as stopping to look may cause birds to stay off their nest.
- Walk only along the water's edge and not pick up or step on any beach debris like seaweed or sticks. There may be a chick hiding amongst it.

Like most Sydney beaches, dogs are not allowed on the Deeban Spit beach area or the foreshore reserves at any time. Birds will be disturbed much earlier and stay off nest much longer when they see a dog. They see you, and are moving off nest, before you see them.

Dogs running along a beach can accidentally tread on a chick, or if they see one running, thinking it to be a rolling tennis ball, scoop it up and crush it. Chicks can quickly become buried if the parents are scared off the nest too often.

Unlike most Sydney beaches Maianbar is home to endangered bird species that Australia has international obligations to protect. This is why dogs are not permitted on the beach or foreshore reserves at any time. See the following websites for where dogs are permitted around the Shire and Sydney.



Pied Oystercatcher, Photos courtesy of Cameron Douglas



<http://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Outdoors/Beaches/Beach-Locations>
www.greatdogwalks.com.au/sydney-dog-friendly-beaches.aspx

Migratory shorebirds arrive early August and depart during March. They use the beach at high tide so they can take a rest; local shorebirds use it so they can make a nest. Tidal sand flats are used at low tide as this is their food chest.

Many are now endangered and need your help

For the facts (like why you see some in winter) follow the journey:

<http://ouoystercatchers.wix.com/shireshorebirds>

www.birdlife.org.au/projects/shorebirds-2020

<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-17/flying-for-your-life-ann-jones/7459288>



Bar Tailed Godwits, photos courtesy John Prats

MARINE PARKS: THE CASE FOR A SYDNEY MARINE PARK

Gary Schoer, Secretary Southern Sydney Branch; NSW State Councillor and Marine Education Facilitator, NPA NSW was able to ask a question of the NSW Premier, Mike Baird, at a community forum at Hurstville organised by Mark Coure, MP

Mr Premier

Have you been made aware after 4 1/2 years of community consultations of the overwhelming scientific, social and economic evidence for the value of closing the gap in NSW's marine park network by agreeing to a new multi-use Sydney Marine Park between Newcastle and Wollongong? If you are aware, why is there going to be a fourth round of community consultations on the issue before your government actually announces some intent? The details can come later as boundaries and zonations are discussed by the wider community, but we in NPA and many other Peak Environment groups wonder why you are procrastinating on standing up for one of the best proven ways to restore biodiversity to our marine waters and provide a buffer to some of the worst predicted consequences of climate change...as three government reports have already acknowledged marine parks can achieve...backed up by evidence in about 1000 scientific papers world-wide. You acted decisively on greyhound racing based on evidence...Will you, right now, acknowledge the value of marine parks as an essential part of the mix to improve marine biodiversity which also includes pollution control and habitat restoration or are we going to continue to see a rollback of marine park protections like the sanctuaries you have already downgraded in existing marine parks and not restored?

The Premier missed the whole point in his answer...he asserted that continuing community consultation had to be done, but when I pointed out that the bureaucratic head of the consultation had already advised in latest newsletter on the project that

“any proposals for spatial management (ie Sydney Marine Park decision) will need to be further discussed with the community and key stakeholders to inform the final advice to the Government.” And I pushed him further in the Government announcing an INTENT to proceed and an agreed consultation on details, he stated that “I am a believer in marine parks”. I suppose this is one step above saying he likes surfing. The Premier also related as a positive that the government has restored twenty of the thirty sanctuary zone wind backs in existing NSW Marine Parks. He suggested the fate of the other ten would be determined by considering evidence. This is ironic in that the only evidence the government considered in these wind backs of protections on many beach and headland sanctuaries was lack of evidence about threatened species...the fact that massive evidence shows that well designed sanctuaries improve biodiversity did not figure in the original wind back decision. The word “evidence” is poorly applied by this government on the marine front. Unless one major buffer to the threat of climate change is addressed by closing the gap on marine protections in NSW, we are not using science effectively to truly protect our marine assets for the future.

NPA challenges the NSW Government to state some explicit intent with respect to a much-needed new Marine Park for Sydney. Our local member has twice publicly supported a Sydney Marine Park, the Premier “believes in them” , and the Minister for Environment

whilst still a backbencher, urged the then Environment Minister, Rob Stokes, to create a Sydney Marine Park during the World Parks Congress of 2014. ...and Rob Stokes told us several years ago that he “shares our values”. The government has a strange way of acting on these values as we await some decisiveness on the issue.



Source: http://mashable.com/2016/09/11/ocean-conservation-30-percent-2030/#F_3qu.alwggj

And on September 16th 2016 nations and organisations at the IUCN World Conservation Congress just passed a resolution for 30% of the world's oceans to be protected by 2030.

At the same time President Obama created the world's largest marine park NW of Hawaii. This happened at Midway Atoll, a remote spit of land within the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. The announcement will more than quadruple the size of the sanctuary and ban commercial fishing in some 1.5 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean.