



### GEORGES RIVERKEEPER - LOOKING AFTER OUR WATERWAYS

The Riverkeeper, Rob Dixon, spoke to the Society about Georges Riverkeeper (GR), an organisation that has been working to maintain and improve the conditions of the Georges River for over 40 years. His talk highlighted the importance and difficulties looking after 96 Km of River, 930 Sq Km of river catchment containing 30 endangered ecological communities.

The GR organisation is a wonderful example of 8 Councils on the Georges River (Councillors & technical staff), Sydney Water and community members working together with the challenging task of looking after the river and surrounds. Some of the activities undertaken are: litter collection, bush care, building site pollution controls, research collaborations, advocacy with state and federal governments and education programs. Check out their website <https://georgesriver.org.au/about-us>

This presentation can be viewed on OFF's YouTube channel [here](#).

### THE CONVICT TRAIL IN DHARUG NP

The Great North Road is a convict built masterpiece constructed between 1826 and 1834 to provide an overland route from Sydney to the Hunter Valley. At the time it was the largest public work yet undertaken in the colony and remains one of the major engineering feats of Australia's convict era. After negotiating the Wiseman's Ferry car crossing, 12 walkers, led by Liz Cameron, set off on a sunny day to conquer Devines Hill on this sturdy and historic road. Members marvelled at the stone work of the convicts and reflected on life in the 1800s. Many of these aspects were described on plaques and descriptive panels scattered along the World Heritage listed monument. As we reached the summit and joined Finch's Line, we were rewarded with scenic views of the Hawkesbury River, including its confluence with the Macdonald River, and valley views. A few remnant Gynea Lilies and early flowers added an air of Spring to our walk. Thank you Liz for organising the walk and being an expert guide on plants. View photos [here](#).

### GLENLEE UPDATE

Friends of Glenlee (FoG) held its AGM on 25th July. This meeting reported on the activities of the association over the year, elected a new committee and endorsed changes to the FoG constitution, needed because of the sale of the property.

In his [report](#) to the AGM, President, Brian Ralston, stated that "the sale of Glenlee does not represent the end of FOG. The importance of Glenlee is now known by many and it is vital that we remain vigilant to ensure that the Council requires strict compliance with the existing order and monitors any development applications which may be lodged."

The following photo of a tree that was cut down at Glenlee was included in an update from FoG following the AGM. It confirms what was emphasised in their previous update, that continual vigilance is required to avoid wanton destruction on the site. What should also be highlighted is the possibility of future development 'creep', ie, even after development approval, there is a danger that amendments may be applied for, a common way of over-development taking place.



### 2024 PLANTING EVENTS

The next regional planting is on September 14 at Grabben Gully, south of Crookwell. Maia and Philip Gould have just embarked on their re-greening journey at their 40 ha property, consisting of pasture and bushland. The property is located at 600 Hawthornes Tree Road, Grabben Gully, which is 1.5 hours from Canberra and 3.5 hours from Sydney.

Bring your own gloves, hat and water bottle and wear appropriate clothing, long sleeves, long pants and enclosed footwear. All tools will be provided. Read more about Rotary-Adopt-A-Tree events [here](#).

### NATIONAL TREE DAY PLANTING

There was a great turn out for National Tree Day on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July. Lots of volunteers worked together to plant more than 1,000 plants at Pearce Ave Peakhurst. Thank you Georges River Council Bushcare, as well as [Councillor Natalie Mort: Georges River Council - Blakehurst Ward](#) and [Councillor Peter Mahoney: Peakhurst Ward - Georges River Council](#) for your support on the day. It was fabulous to see so many people caring for the environment and wanting to make their area a cleaner and greener place.

There were also plenty of children learning about the importance of expanding our Bushland area! Council also had an opportunity to share some of the issues in the managing and maintaining our precious Bushland! Now it's time to look after those plants and carry out weed control for the next years to ensure that the plants have the best start in life!



Photos of the day can be viewed [here](#).

### FIXING AUSTRALIA'S ENVIRONMENT FOR 0.3% OF GDP

Australia's environment could be fixed and threatened species saved for just 0.3% of GDP, experts say. As [reported](#) in the Guardian, the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists estimates \$7.3bn a year for 30 years could avoid most extinctions, repair soils and restore rivers. Scientists, governance and business leaders have produced a dollar estimate of what it would take to fix Australia's environment, including 24 actions which, could "avoid most extinctions and recover almost all threatened species", repair the productive base of agricultural soils and fix over-allocated and fragmented river systems.

### DO EVs PRODUCE FEWER CARBON EMISSIONS THAN ICE CARS?

Engineers Australia recently crunched the numbers to paint a full picture on whether electric vehicles (EVs) actually do produce less greenhouse emissions than fossil-fuel vehicles with internal combustion engines (ICEs). Despite their green credentials, electric vehicles produce around twice as many greenhouse gases during their manufacture as a typical combustion car. Manufacturing an EV's [lithium-ion battery](#) accounts for between 40-60 per cent of its total production emissions, or roughly about the same as producing all the other materials required to make the car combined.

If electric vehicles have a larger carbon footprint before they even turn a wheel, then the advantage swings back dramatically once you hit the road. Unlike petrol vehicles, which burn fuel to power their engines and release emissions in the process, EVs produce no tailpipe emissions. Electric powertrains are also far more efficient at turning their stored energy into momentum. The biggest influence on an EV's driving emissions is the source of the electricity used to power its large battery. The cleaner the energy source, the lower the emissions. Even the 'dirtiest' electric car, however, will produce far fewer emissions to drive than a petrol-powered vehicle.

The study, available [here](#), concluded that, while an electric car might start with a higher emissions tally, after three years of ownership, or around 38,000 km of driving, an EV clearly becomes the cleaner option.

Another [article](#) in the Conversation looks at the how the arguments in general against EVs stack up, concluding that most of the perceived barriers to EV uptake aren't really barriers at all

## Coming OFF Events in August/September 2024

OFF Full Year Events Calendar: <http://www.oatleyflorafauna.org.au/index.php/progam/>

Meetings are held in the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley, starting at 7.30pm. Meetings will also normally be available on-line, using the video conference application Zoom. If you are on the OFF News email list, you will receive an invitation by email prior to meetings or use this link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i\\_daK5memiUVeVb7bERgr5WgKybj2w](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i_daK5memiUVeVb7bERgr5WgKybj2w) Note: Some OFF presentations & movies can now be found on YouTube

*Note that the August field day was held on 11 August, prior to publication of this edition of the Newsletter.*

### 19 August – Rewilding Australia's Threatened Mammals. A/Prof Katherine Moseby.

*Note: This talk was previously titled Building Behavioural Resilience in Bilbies, Quolls and Stick-nest Rats*

Australia has the highest recent extinction rate in the world and our desert mammals have been disproportionately affected. Rewilding seeks to restore threatened mammal species to areas where they are locally extinct whilst also reinstating important ecosystem processes. This talk will highlight some rewilding successes in Australia and the methods used to return native mammals to parts of their former range.

A/Prof Katherine Moseby is a Conservation Biologist at the UNSW who focusses on applied research and on-ground action. She lives and works in Australia's arid and semi-arid zones and her research interests include ecosystem restoration, facilitating co-existence of native species and introduced predators, and improving the reintroduction success of threatened species

### 22 August (Thursday) - Local Bushcare

Members can assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites on a Thursday either 1 or 2 weeks after general meetings (exc Dec) from 8.00 to 11 am. This month we will be at lower Gannons Park supervised by a GRC Bushcare Officer. We welcome new bushcarers:

<https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Council/Volunteering>

### 14 September (Saturday) - Oatley Park Bushcare

OFF members volunteer to carry out bush regeneration at Oatley Park on the second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm, (except January). Meet at the entrance on Oatley Park Avenue. New participants welcome. Please check with GRC Bushcare Officer on 0435 963 643 before coming.

*Advance notice: 29 September (Sunday) – Bottle Forest Trail walk (a leisurely stroll to see waratahs in flower). Heathcote NP. Leader: Lesley Wylie.*

*Meetings of the Society are at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, usually on the third Monday of the month. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and field days. As noted above, the meeting is accessible on-line using ZOOM.*

### BRIEFLY SPEAKING .....

**CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY** meetings are held at 2.30 pm on the second Sunday of every month. These meetings are now being held on-line using Zoom. The address is <http://zoom.us/j/7868786878>

### MEMBER COUNCILLOR PETER MAHONEY BACK AT COUNCIL

OFF members will be further pleased to know that Georges River Councillor Peter Mahoney, badly injured in a serious car accident, although still in convalescence, is now making his presence felt again back at committee and council meetings.

### RECYCLING

Readers may recall a list of recycling opportunities in the January edition of this Newsletter. Well, another one has been located, at Officeworks. In addition to more commonly recycled items, such as mobile phones, computers, ink and toner cartridges, etc, they also accept **pens** and **markers**. Note though, that they do not accept pencils. They also do not accept batteries. Look for the cardboard boxes near their store entrances.

### UPCOMING COUNCIL ELECTIONS

As members are no doubt aware, local government elections are scheduled to take place on 14 September. This is an important opportunity for us all to cast our vote in favour of the environment. We have seen some improvements in environmental initiatives during the current Council's cycle, but we need the momentum to continue and grow. The way to encourage that is to vote for candidates who have our local environment front and centre and who will fight for it.

### KOALA ARMY'S MARCH FOR CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

The Australia Koala Foundation has organised a march for people to be the voices of all creatures that call Koala forests their home and call for a Koala Protection Act. Join the march on **1st September** in Canberra. Details [here](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/page/koala_foundation/march.html).

**STREAMWATCH** takes place on Tuesday mornings (9.00 am) 1 week after OFF General Meetings. This month we will be at Myles Dunphy Creek on 27 August. Check before coming on 0437 791 988.

In July it was a beautiful blue sky day and perfect conditions for testing the water at Dairy Creek and carrying out a rubbish survey. Water testing showed higher than normal salinity - probably due to low recent rainfall. Stormwater rubbish collected from the creek included, wet wipes, vapes, coffee cups and lids, plastic food wrap, a traffic cone and foam fragments. Work was also observed higher up the creek on the failed gabion wall. Let's hope they have more success this time!



### KOALA FILM – ADVANCE NOTICE - SAVE THE DATE

This disturbing film, about Australia's threatened iconic marsupial, the Koala, mentioned in last month's Newsletter, will be screened at Audley Dance Hall at **6.30 on 21st September**. Details in next month's edition. See poster [here](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/page/koala_foundation/march.html).

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