



SOUTH TURRAMURRA
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
(S.T.E.P.)

NEWSLETTER -- MAY, 1981.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING:

THURSDAY, 11TH JUNE, 1981, 8.00 P.M. at
ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH HALL, CNR. COMENARRA
PARKWAY and PARKINSON AVENUE, SOUTH
TURRAMURRA.

This will be S.T.E.P.'s THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and we are fortunate to have a leading aviculturist, GRAEME PHIPPS, as our GUEST SPEAKER. Graeme is PRESIDENT OF THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF N.S.W., and CRNITHOLOGIST at the MACLEAY MUSEUM AT SYDNEY UNIVERSITY.

Aviculturists are those who study the best methods of preserving endangered bird species, and Graeme has been actively involved with the recent release of two Lord Howe Island Woodhens which were bred in captivity and released into their natural habitat in a bid to get them to breed and preserve the species. Lord Howe Island Woodhens are amongst the world's rarest birds and this pair were the first offspring of the last nine pairs saved from extinction two years ago. It is an important experiment and the results will be watched with great interest by all those fighting to save endangered species.

Our guest speaker will also discuss the role of the aviculturist in cases where there is no chance of endangered birds being released because, for them, the wild no longer exists; the trapping of native birds for sale overseas; the seriousness of illegal bird smuggling activity; the knowledge of birds gained by studying them in captivity and how this helps in the long run to conserve them.

Slides will be shown, and Graeme will be happy to answer questions after his talk, including any about birds in urban bushland, such as those in the Lane Cove Valley. He can tell you what their chances of survival are, why some species have disappeared, why some birds migrate while others don't, whether hand feeding of birds in our gardens is beneficial or harmful, and answer any other questions you may have about birds.

The business section of the Annual General Meeting will be held after the talk and members are reminded that annual membership fees fall due on this date. Family membership is \$2-00 and single membership \$1-00. Management Plans will be on sale at the meeting at \$5-00 each.

Election of office bearers will take place and the outgoing Committee has recommended that the following motions be put concerning the Constitution:-

1. That the following words be added to Item 3B: "who have been

members for a minimum of three calendar months."

Item 3B would then read "Voting shall be restricted to financial members over 18, who have been members for a minimum of three calendar months."

2. That the following words be added to Item 6A after "Financial members," "of at least three months standing," and that the following sentence be added at the end of 6A, "The voting shall be by secret ballot."

Item 6A would then read "The Annual General Meeting of all members shall be called during the month of June. All offices shall then automatically fall vacant. Only financial members of at least three months standing shall be eligible to stand for office and/or to vote in the election of officers. The voting shall be by secret ballot."

Please make every effort to attend the meeting as it will mark S.T.E.P.'s third successful year in local conservation.

** KU-RING-GAI CCUNCIL'S BUSHLAND MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY.

The first meeting of this committee took place on 13th May, 1981. The working party will formulate policies for the better management of Ku-ring-gai's bushland. It is comprised of four Aldermen, Presidents of S.T.E.P. and Ku-ring-gai Bushland and Environmental Society, four residents of Ku-ring-gai who also have interest and expertise in bushland management and three members of Council staff.

It was gratifying for S.T.E.P. to hear Andrew Guest the Director of Parks, and both Comenarra Ward Aldermen Richard Lennon and Bill Thomson publicly acknowledge at this first meeting, that S.T.E.P. was largely responsible for increasing the interest in urban bushland which led to the formation of the new committee.

The many recommendations set out in our Plan of Management are under review and will undoubtedly prove useful in formulating an over-all plan for all of Ku-ring-gai's bushland areas.

** CCUNCIL ENDCRSES S.T.E.P.'s FIRE POLICY.

S.T.E.P. has recently received a report from Council on the Fire Policy as spelt out in our Plan of Management, which advocates the selective hand clearing of vegetation to reduce bushfire risk. S.T.E.P. regards this method of fuel reduction as being far less damaging to the environment than the alternative method of control burning.

In the official report, Council's Health Surveyor states that "...selective hand clearing can provide a level of protection against wildfire comparable to control burning," and "Environmentally the proposed method (S.T.E.P.'s) is more selective than control burning and will assist in weed control in the urban situation."

Council's Bush Fire and Emergency Services Committee also recommended "that while adequate protection is provided by clearing works undertaken by S.T.E.P., no control burning is necessary."

** S.T.E.P.'s FIREBREAK CLEARING PROGRAMME.

Selective hand clearing is progressing well in the area between Cove Street and Robin Avenue, however we still need some

help from members and friends to finish the job.

South Turrumurra's last remaining area of Banksia ericifolia closed scrub near Ashburton Avenue is presently at risk. This is also a valuable breeding ground for birds and small animals and must be preserved. The State Recreation Area Trust has recently confirmed in writing that if management of the Lane Cove Valley is entrusted to them in the future, this closed scrub region will be declared a "Protection Area," because of its special value to the Valley.

If you can offer a few hours assistance for this worthwhile project, Alan Catford on 449-1658 will be pleased to hear from you.

** S.T.E.P. STALL.

On Saturday morning, 13th June, S.T.E.P. will hold a street stall at the Kissing Point Shopping Centre, Auluba Road. This is mainly a public awareness exercise, with some items, such as wildlife posters and native plants for sale. Anyone who would like to spend some time in congenial company boosting S.T.E.P.'s funds is certainly welcome to help, and all are asked to support the stall however possible. CALL IN AND BRING A FRIEND, OR EVEN BETTER A NEW MEMBER.

** THE PARRAMATTA PARK ISSUE.

The Parramatta Park issue continues to be of great concern to those unhappy about the alienation of public land for sporting purposes. A very enjoyable Rally was held on the afternoon of Sunday, 17th May at the Park. Many eminent bodies such as the National Trust and the Friends of Parramatta Park, and well-known guests enjoyed the speakers ably chaired by Murray Wilcox, who called for a public enquiry into the matter of all parkland alienation, including the Cumberland Oval proposal. It seems there are grounds for Court action challenging the proposal under the new Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the Local Government Act which could delay the project for over two years. Tom Uren, Labour, believes a public environmental enquiry would be cheaper and quicker.

** SCUTH WEST TASMANIA.

In South West Tasmania, the alternative to damming the Franklin is to dam the Gordon. Conservationists will fight this year to bring to the public attention the unique beauty of the Gordon Splits, a rock formation on the river, rated with Ayers Rock and the Barrier Reef as of special worth.

** WORLD WILDLIFE FUND.

W.W.F., shortly to celebrate its 20th birthday, in its newsletter describes the many fascinating programmes currently underway worldwide. Australia is a strong and active member, and some of our projects at the moment include:-

- * the classification of vulnerable plant species.
- * the triumph of a turtle-breeding rookery over planned residential rezoning near Bundaberg.
- * location of Dibbler populations.
- * determination of range and status of Australia's rare birds.
- * search for the Paradise Parrot, not seen for 50 years.
- * survey of the endangered orange-bellied parrot.

* study of the Freckled Duck.

** YEAR OF THE TREE -- 1982.

United Nations Association of Australia is shortly to have a conference which will call for the investigation of deforestation and the accompanying ecological and environmental problems, and the proliferation of treeless urban areas. This is a prelude to requesting the United Nations to declare the International Year of the Tree.

** REMEMBER WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY -- 5TH JUNE.

THE SLOGAN IS --

CUR TREES PROTECT US -- CONSERVE THEM.

ENQUIRIES:

PRESIDENT: Helen Petersen 449-4526

SECRETARY: Margaret Booth 449-3746

TREASURER: Yvonne Langshaw 449-1541

Jan Catford 449 1658

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off Bannan
off Lancon.*

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S.T.E.P. member Yvonne Langshaw, together with Helen Goldsmith, Merryl Roper and Jean Melvin are having an exhibition of paintings showing different aspects of our Australian environment. Helen Goldsmith, a water colour artist and teacher depicts old cottages and iron lace with great delicacy; Merryl Roper (water colours) and Jean Melvin (oils) landscapes; and Yvonne Langshaw (acrylics) interpretations of natural environments. The exhibition will be held at historic "Willandra," corner Victoria Road and Devlin Street, Ryde, and will also provide an opportunity to view this beautifully restored building. Members and friends are welcome to the preview at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 15th June, 1981. The exhibition will be on public view until 4th July, during the hours -- Mon. to Thurs. 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and Sat. and Sun. 2-4 p.m.

Enquiries: Y. Langshaw 449-1541. Willandra 808-2254.