



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

Sept 2016

wollicreek.org.au

**“THEY PAVED PARADISE
- and put up a parking lot”**
Joni Mitchell

On National Threatened Species Day 2016, just a few days ago, Westconnex crews moved in to the 1.8 ha remnant of critically endangered Cooks River Castlereagh Ironbark Forest at Beverly Grove to clear-fell the forest and make way for a construction vehicle park.



The many protesters who came to witness the work over the week managed to at least slow it down. Quite a few were removed by police. The arrest of one woman chained at the neck to a tree took over two hours to clear. Our protests were also well covered in the media, so at least our voice was heard.



But, despite spirited protests, the deed has been done and this wedge of forest between Canterbury Golf Club and the M5 Motorway has been permanently destroyed – all for a temporary worksite carpark.

As member Sam Muglia says,
“The stupidity is beyond believable”



ashes endangered forest

BEVERLY GROVE FOREST HABITAT DESTROYED

“It was a beautiful place and it’s so sad to see it go for something so unnecessary,” says member Colin Hesse, who was actively involved in the protest action



A complex ecology that you can’t just put back



The forest was home to Blue Wrens, Black-faced Cuckoo Shrikes and other birds, who have now lost their nests. Powerful Owls also relied on this habitat.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Register your disgust with Roads Minister Gay on 8574 5500 or Environment Minister Speakman on 8574 6390 or via email to office@speakman.minister.nsw.gov.au

TWO SUCCESSFUL STALLS IN AUGUST

These stalls were a great way to push our anti-Westconnex postcard campaign, raise awareness and sign up new members

Sam Muglia gets another signature at Addison Road Markets

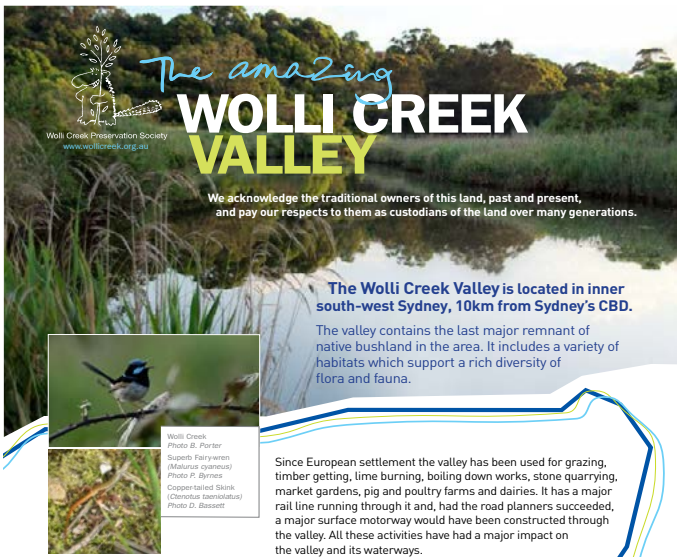


Our first stall at the Cooks River Day Out held at Steel Park in Marrickville in August was visited by lots of people. We gained new members, sold a reasonable number of our publications and got 125 postcards to the Premier signed and given to us for posting. Donations for stamps more than covered this expense.

Similarly, our second stall the following weekend at the Addison Road markets received very positive responses from market visitors. Not as many publications were sold, as we would expect from a less informed and geographically dispersed group. But we gained more new members and all the remaining postcards, over 200, were given out and signed.

If you didn’t get a chance to send your own postcard to the Premier demanding that the Bexley North bushland be handed over from RMS, we can send you an electronic version for you to print and send – it doesn’t matter if it’s in black and white. We may do another print run in the near future, depending on the response we get.

Deb Little



The amazing
WOLLI CREEK VALLEY

Wolli Creek Preservation Society
www.wollicreek.org.au

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, past and present, and pay our respects to them as custodians of the land over many generations.

The Wolli Creek Valley is located in inner south-west Sydney, 10km from Sydney's CBD.

The valley contains the last major remnant of native bushland in the area. It includes a variety of habitats which support a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

Wolli Creek
Photo B. Porter
Sugie's Fairy-wren (Malurus glaucus)
Photo P. Byrnes
Copper-tailed Shrike (Choreutes variabilis)
Photo D. Bassett

Since European settlement the valley has been used for grazing, timber getting, lime burning, boiling down works, stone quarrying, market gardens, pig and poultry farms and dairies. It has a major rail line running through it and, had the road planners succeeded, a major surface motorway would have been constructed through the valley. All these activities have had a major impact on the valley and its waterways.

HOW HAS THE VALLEY SURVIVED?

In many ways the history of the Wolli Creek Valley is one of an accident of survival. In spite of its proximity to the centre of Sydney and the many destructive and polluting activities that have taken place in and around its waterways, much of the Valley has survived in a near natural state. Many factors contributed to this:

- The topography, with its steep sandstone cliffs, poor sandy soils and frequent floods made it unattractive to farmers and subdividers.
- Fluctuating land values, depressions, wars and lack of access to rail transport meant the valley was not closely settled when the first settlers arrived and during the expansion of Sydney in the late nineteenth century.
- Ironically, it was protected from development later by reservations for the East Hills Railway Line and M5 motorway.
- In 1978, resident action opposing the M5 East led to the government's decision to build the motorway in a tunnel and make the Wolli Creek Valley a regional park.

What's in a name?

The name 'Wollar' was first used for the creek in 1834 and then in an auction plan as Woolli in 1834. Said to mean 'camping place' in the local Aboriginal language, there are no official records as to the name. It may be associated with an Aboriginal youth who was employed by Joshua Thorp who set up house near the junction of Cooks River and Wolli Creek in the early 1830s.

Wolli Creek is a tributary of the Cooks River and rises at Narwee from where it flows east. At Turrella it is joined by Bardwell Creek and shortly after, at the Henderson Street weir, the creek becomes tidal until its junction with Cooks River at Tempe.



Would you like the Amazing Wolli Creek Valley Exhibition at your school, community centre or event?

This terrific series of sixteen free-standing display panels covers many topics of relevance, such as oral history, heritage, wildlife, traditional owners, resident action, natural landscape, disappearing bushland, recreation, habitat, water catchment, bush restoration, farming, birdlife, creativity, learning and living with nature.

Contact Judy Finlason info@wollicreek.org.au



PRESCHOOLERS GO BUSH

Earlwood Uniting Church Preschool is a community-based not for profit service, operating for 66 years in the local community. Our Bush Preschool was first started in 2014 and came from a keen desire to provide the children with the opportunity to spend extended time in the outdoors and nature, and to encourage them to play and develop a sense of belonging to this valley. We want them to develop a love and respect for this valley and the environment.

The educators, together with parents, take small groups of 10 children to Wolli Creek Regional Park each Tuesday and Friday. It is only a short walk to the Terminus before we descend into the valley via Fauna St. Included in our backpacks are kitchen tongs, which we use to pick up rubbish that we find during our visits and then drop in the bins at Girrahween Park as we leave. We like to leave our valley a little better than we find it.

A wonderful outcome of these experiences is that our families are learning about this bushland from their own children. They are following up and visiting with the children to explore the valley together. The children, educators and families have gained a lot from these excursions to our local bushland.

Sue Nevin

ANNUAL DINNER

BOOK EARLY, BOOK FOR MANY!

“Personally, one of the most stressful things about organizing the Annual Dinner every year is having to ring around and chase up people to book, especially as the date draws closer. We often find we have nowhere near our targeted number unless we get on the phone and chase people. This seems to happen year after year.”

Deb Little

Deb Little our President has done a marvelous job masterminding our Annual Dinner for years, but now she's worn out and feeling the stress.

It's not fair that she and others have to ring around to find out whether people are coming or not. We need members to give us a commitment that they will come on the night - now.

“We know that people enjoy the Dinner, because we get that feedback. Even if you have to tell us that you can't make it because of other commitments, if you do so in advance it helps with planning and expectations re numbers.”



FRIDAY 21ST OCTOBER
ST GEORGE ROWING CLUB
 1 LEVEY ST. WOLLI CREEK

\$50 per head

Buffet Dinner
Vegetarians and GF catered for
Raffle prizes, quiz, catch up with friends

Payment to WCPS by direct deposit to our bank account BSB 032 067 Acc 288295 Please show 'AD' and your name in the 'identification' section and send an email confirming this.

Or send a cheque to WCPS PO Box 270 Earlwood 2206

Got any produce that would make a good prize for the raffle?

Let us know at info@wollicreek.org.au



SPEAKER PHIL STRAW



The threats to shorebirds that spend part of their life cycle in Australia have been in the news lately. We have been hearing about the vast developments happening in wetlands and inter-tidal mudflats in China and South Korea.

Phil was one of the scientists interviewed as part of the wonderful recent ABC Radio National Off Track program in four parts, [“Flying for Your Life”](#), about this very subject.

Phil Straw is an Avian and Wetlands Ecologist and an expert on waders and migratory shorebirds. He's the director of Avifauna Research & Services, dedicated to the conservation of wetlands and waterbirds.

Phil also works for BirdLife Australia, both locally and internationally and at 75, he has a long history of involvement in the world of ornithology, starting as a schoolboy bird watcher in the 1950s.

His insights are bound to be useful to our understanding of the habitat needs of shorebirds in the lower reaches of Wolli Creek, the Cooks River and nearby waterways like Landing Lights wetland.

RECENT ACTIVITY

JULY FUNGI FORAY

The weather looked threatening on the day but, excited by the rain that had fallen in the weeks before, we were keen to proceed on a hunt for fungi.

15 people turned up to see what they could find. The Sydney Fungal Studies Group (SFSGI) and WCPS collected during the morning, then sorted and identified specimens over a welcome lunch in Girrahween Park.

The preceding weather had also been a bit cool, so we were hoping to find some colourful Hygrocybe species and we weren't disappointed. There were green, yellow, red and white Hygrocybe and allied species, together with fungi that looked like brains (Calvatia species) and mushrooms just like the ones you can buy in the shops.

Joanna Robinski



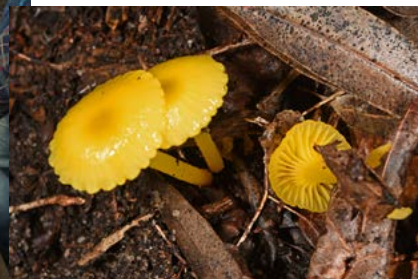
Hygrocybe collucera

Calvatia species



Gliophorus garminicolor
by Ray Kearney

Hygrocybe chromolimonea
by Ray Kearney



VALLEY BUSHWALK

Rain forced Ute to cancel her first walk date, but so many people were keen to come, she had to reschedule two walks to compensate. People enjoyed the walk, learnt a lot of history and, of course, enjoyed dropping in at Judy's cottage in Jackson Place.



Calling for nominations
for the
Neil Rankin Award
Wolli Creek
2016



**DO YOU KNOW OF A PROJECT
OR ENVIRONMENTAL
PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN
YOU WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE?**

The Rankin Award, in memory of the late Neil Rankin, who was known as the 'Birdman of Wolli Creek', aims to foster children's enjoyment and understanding of the natural world.

Nominations are welcome from parents, teachers, students and members of the general public for activities that involve a whole school, a class, community group or individual projects undertaken by primary age children during the past two years.

Projects should encourage practical, hands-on opportunities for children to experience and care for the natural environment. Where possible activities should use local resources, such as the Wolli Creek Valley, for excursions and activities and take place within the Canterbury, Marrickville or Rockdale areas.

Awards and prizes of up to \$200 will be presented during October 2016.

**Nominations close by
30th September 2016**

For more information, nomination forms and if you would like to be on the advisory panel to help assess applications contact:

Judy Finlason info@wollicreek.org.au



**Do you need a
WCPS T-SHIRT?**

We will be putting in another order for WCPS t-shirts towards the end of the year, if we get enough orders.

An order form is available on the WCPS website (About Us > Support Us) with sizes and details required.

The new short-sleeve shirts, with a more stylish cut, have been very popular. Long sleeve shirts are also available. Shirts are \$20 each.

Contact Deryn Griffiths on 95911828 or deryngriffiths@optusnet.com.au if you have any queries and get your order in by 24 October to be part of this print run.



Pandorea in bloom
on the Girrahween Track

BANK-SIDE DEVELOPMENT

Another Henderson Street development saga is happening in Turrella.

In previous Updates we've told you about the continuing problems with the unapproved development at 1-3 Henderson Street and its impacts upon the creek-side land, or riparian zone. This time it's at No.2, also smack bang beside the creek, where there has been inadequate regulatory oversight by Council and the private Certifier for the bakery development.

Despite WCPS alerting Rockdale Council to the lack of any sedimentation control between the creek and the construction site back in March this year and again in early June, nothing was done before the strong east coast low that hit Sydney over the June long weekend.

As a result a significant volume of sediment washed into the creek. The sediment control fence that was belatedly erected was also inadequate, and only recently have the most basic of construction site consent conditions been adhered to, no thanks to Council. It does make you wonder what else goes on at such sites, not visible to the public.



photo and story by Deb Little

Soil spreading down the creek bank

Meanwhile it looks like the DA for the holding yard or depot at 1-3 Henderson St. will, after an earlier rejection by Council, now be approved. We have put in a further submission to Council concerning what we see as essential approval conditions, particularly in relation to remediation and protection of the riparian zone, which has effectively been trashed by the developer.

If you see any other bad practices in the Valley, take pictures and send them in.

BUSHCARE

VOLUNTEER GRANT FROM OHS

NPWS Senior Field Officer Kim Waterhouse has obtained a budget from the Office of Environment & Heritage Volunteer Grant Program to support the work of volunteer bush regenerators in the Wolli Valley.

Thanks to her application 'Sustaining Community Involvement in Bushcare in Wolli Creek Regional Park', a total of \$8,750 will be available to allocate to such items as new and replacement tools, training opportunities and a recruitment leaflet.

This is an encouraging development, as we know how severely the NPWS budget has been slashed in recent years. We look forward to working the details out with Kim in the near future.



photo by Tammy Owens

JACKSON TRIANGLE

The Jackson Triangle, corner of Jackson Place and Highcliff Road in Earlwood, is an 'Adopt a Plot' project looked after by local residents with some support from Canterbury Council. It's showing the results of work done over the past years by Jackson Place residents and some WCPS members.

At our last weeding and tree planting, we were enthusiastically assisted by our youngest residents who are keen bushcarers. It was a busy and satisfying morning, followed by a delicious morning tea organised by our newest resident.

It was a wonderful chance to relax, chat and get to know each other.

MEMBERSHIP

Family One Year \$15
Individual One Year \$10
Concession \$7
Group Membership \$30

Direct Deposit Westpac BSB 032 067
WCPS Inc 288295, with your
SURNAME and RENEW in
the information line

Email info@wollicreek.org.au to confirm
years and any donation included

WCPS MEMBERSHIP FOR GROUPS

THE MORE MEMBERS WE HAVE,
THE MORE CLOUT WE HAVE

Rhonda Daniels, from the Australian Plants
Society, Sutherland Group, says,

*"I agree that it is important to have member-
ship statistics that make politicians pause.
One idea is to focus on group/organisation
membership, which I didn't realise was an op-
tion. Then you can say "WCPS has xx individ-
ual members and xx groups which represent
a further xxxx people who care about Wolli
Creek".*

Do you know of a local group or organisation
who might like to become a WCPS member?

For only \$30/year it's an easy way for the
group to support conservation. Maybe each
of us could make direct approaches to local
groups.

I myself will raise the idea of APS Sutherland
joining at our next committee meeting."

Can you think of a group you
could contact?

EDITOR & LAYOUT: LAURA ZUSTERS

CALENDAR

Bush Regeneration: Sep 3, 11, 14, 16, 17. Oct
1, 9, 12, 14, 15. Nov 5, 9, 13, 18, 19. Dec 3, 11, 14,
16, 17. Get details of locations via [bushcare@wolli-
creek.org.au](mailto:bushcare@wolli-creek.org.au), from WCPS website calendar or phone
9554 3176. Always check in case of changes at short
notice.

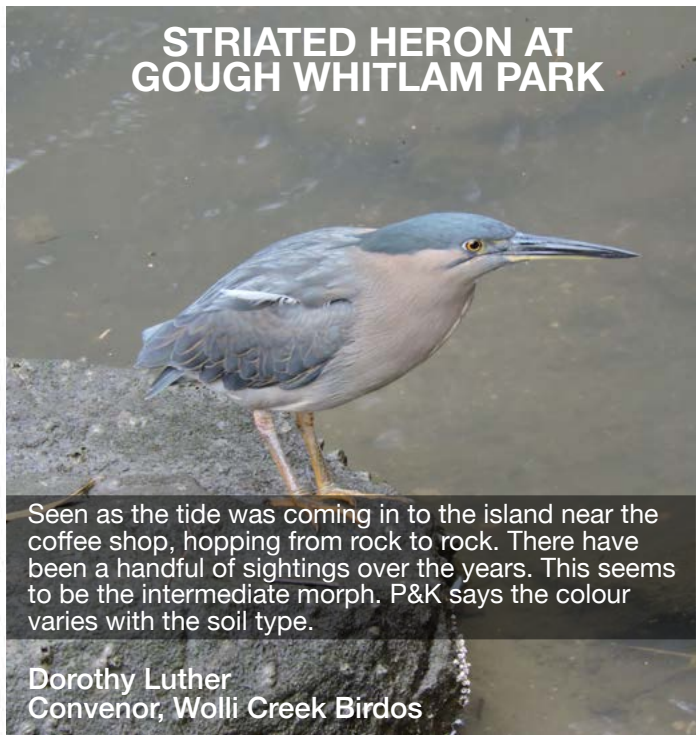
Bat Counting: Generally, the third Friday of each
month, just after sunset. For up-to-date details, join
the bat group email list by contacting [bats@wollicreek.
org.au](mailto:bats@wollicreek.org.au) and come along to see the fly-out or join in the
counting

Bird Surveys: Ten teams are doing regular monthly
surveys of bird species and numbers present. They
work to their own timetable, but we can get you in-
volved on a team if you contact birds@wollicreek.org.au

Committee Meetings: October 24 (includes
AGM), November 28, January 23, from 7:30 to
9:30pm Inner south-west CDO, Suite 1, Ground Floor,
11-13 Hartill-Law Ave Bardwell Park. All members are
welcome to attend the meetings, notification to WCPS
essential due to security at the building.

Annual Dinner: Friday 21 October, from 7:30pm at St
George Rowing Club, 1 Levey St. Wolli Creek.

STRIATED HERON AT GOUGH WHITLAM PARK



Seen as the tide was coming in to the island near the
coffee shop, hopping from rock to rock. There have
been a handful of sightings over the years. This seems
to be the intermediate morph. P&K says the colour
varies with the soil type.

Dorothy Luther
Convenor, Wolli Creek Birdos

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FB Protect Wolli Creek Valley
www.wollicreek.org.au

