



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

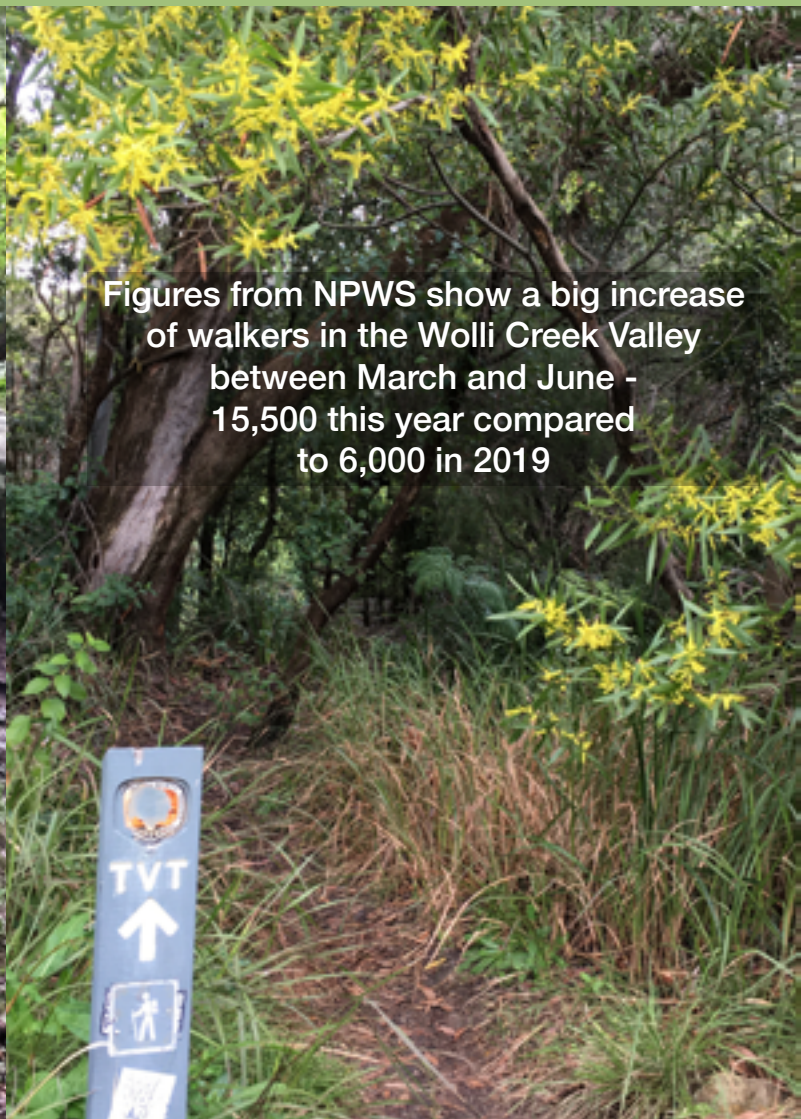
September 2020

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BEEN UP THE WESTERN END LATELY?



It's a great time to go for a walk on the less heavily-used Western Track between Bexley North and Bardwell Park



Figures from NPWS show a big increase of walkers in the Wolli Creek Valley between March and June - 15,500 this year compared to 6,000 in 2019



Silvereye and White-headed Pigeon by local Wollie Birder Zik Teo

ILLEGAL BIRD TRAPPERS ON BRAY AVE KEEP AN EYE OUT

The native Pittosporum is in full flower at the moment in the Valley, throbbing with bees and loved by feasting small birds, like Silvereyes, New Hollands and Scarlet Honeyeaters, who are following the flowering of native spring plants as it spreads south. Keep an eye out for birds' nests, fledgling birds and unusual visitors, like the White-headed Pigeons seen near Bray Ave by bird surveyor Zik Teo.

Unfortunately, people have again been spotted attempting to trap Silvereyes in the Wollie Valley bushland

This is the second time in a year that this illegal activity has occurred. This time, they were seen near Paperbark Creek on Bray Ave and the cages were obtained. Some cages contained what were believed to be captive Silvereyes being used as lures. These caged birds are now being cared for by WIRES and NPWS is investigating further. It is illegal to take birds out of a National or Regional Park in Australia.

Please keep an eye open and report anything that looks like bird trapping immediately to NPWS. Phone The National Parks call centre 13000 (PARKS) or 1300 072 757 and they can pass info on to whoever is rostered for the WCRP area. Or you can email the NPWS Sydney South Area OEH NPWS Sydney South Mailbox at npws.sydneysouth@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Do also let WCPS know immediately at info@wollicreek.org.au, if there is any problem in making contact with NPWS. In any case, please let us know if you do see the bird trappers.

The Fan-tailed Cuckoo is back in town for spring. To listen to their familiar descending trill, go to [the eBird website](#)



Lucas Brook, eBird

Most Citizen Science projects, like our local bird survey teams in the Valley, are local in their scope and involve citizens with a love of nature. They engage in Citizen Science by collecting data in their area and contributing to knowledge in mainly Ecology and Environmental Science. Most people participate by helping to observe and identify species.

If you would like to explore the range of Citizen Science projects in Australia or get involved, have a look at the [Atlas of Living Australia website](#), which is where we record our bird data.

Scarlet Honeyeater by Chris Grounds, Backyard Buddies



OUR LOCAL BIRD SURVEY DATA HELPING SCIENCE

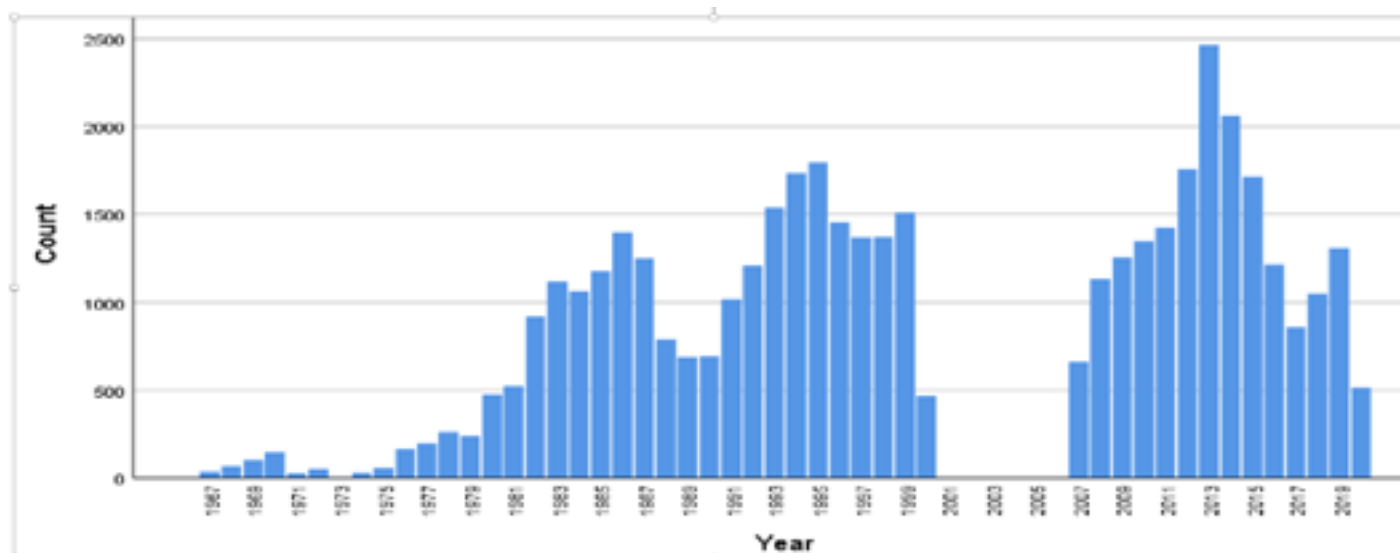
Dorothy Luther has been involved with our bird surveys for many years and continues as the Wollie Creek Birdos data administrator

Dorothy: *“Good news! We now have 3 budding statisticians from Macquarie Uni looking at our survey data & attempting to show the changes in bird populations over time. They are aiming to make a poster display of their findings by the end of the term in October. As we progress, I will post any interesting findings to our [Wollie Birdos Facebook page](#). The first step in the analysis is to see just what data we do have, by year & by survey site.”*

She will help them to analyse data that has been collected by our current bird surveyors and compare this data in the 21st Century to bird species and numbers in the past using Neil Rankin’s observations from the late 20th Century. This semester the students will concentrate on looking at changes in populations.

REPORT 1 – RECORDS PER YEAR

This graph shows the number of bird sightings recorded per year. Its purpose is to see the fluctuations in survey activity over time.



Neil Rankin survey data - 24,943 records

Current survey data – 18,763 records

Bushcarers at Wolli Bluff take a well-earned break
The regeneration at the Bluff has been very successful
thanks to the diligent work of the bushcarers on that site



Photo by Gina Svolos

ODOUR CONTROL UNIT CONSTRUCTION DELAYED

Construction of the new Odour Control Unit (OCU) at Wolli Bluff has been delayed till next year, giving the Society more time to look at ways we can stop the Bluff and surrounding bushland from being destroyed. Our ultimate aim is to have this parcel of land become part of the Wolli Creek Regional Park.

This is one of the last lots of land that needs to be transferred to the management of the National Parks and Wildlife Service to complete the Wolli Creek Regional Park first promised in 1988 by the then Coalition Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore. We continue to seek action by the present Coalition ministers to finalise the Park and have it formally launched as a landmark natural area of regional significance in the inner suburbs of South West Sydney.

Catherine Mullins from Sydney Water says, “The project has been delayed due to Sydney Water entering a new 10-year regional contract to deliver work.” She says that the new timeline for the construction of the Odour Control Unit will have detailed design completed in mid-2021 and construction in late 2021. Sydney Water says they will be working with National Parks during detailed design to ensure their specifications for the suspended walkway are included and to get input to how to screen the OCU tanks.

Gina Svolos

WCPS President

For background information on this issue please see

<http://www.wollicreek.org.au/wolli-bluff-under-threat-action-needed>

Update from Peter Stevens

The Society has had discussions with the Nature Conservation Council, NSW’s peak body for environmental groups, about the proposed OCU. In turn they have spoken with Sydney Water and are less than satisfied with the response they received. We are hoping that their greater influence will ensure that the alternative WCPS has proposed is properly assessed and the detailed reasons for its rejection made public.

We are working on a before and after pair of photos to show the expected impact on Wolli Bluff and the Two Valley Trail.

2011

Those of you who walk the Western End more regularly will be familiar with the
JOHNSTON STREET BIORETENTION SYSTEM

2020

The Bioretention System was installed in 2011 to improve the quality of stormwater from neighbouring houses and streets before it flows down into Wolli Creek. It was built as one in a series of projects to improve the aquatic environment of the Cooks River and its tributaries, including Wolli Creek.

The system is designed to remove gross pollutants like plastic bottles, street rubbish, silt and suspended solids. The stormwater is filtered through surface vegetation and filtration media like sandy loam. A valuable co-benefit is that the vegetation absorbs excess nutrients from garden fertiliser that encourage exotic weed growth and contribute to algal growth and poor water quality in the creek.

WCPS worked closely with the parties involved in the design, build and planting of the Bioretention System to restrict damage to bushland and to existing plantings, although a large clump of Turpentines were sacrificed. Ongoing maintenance of the site has largely fallen to WCPS bushcare volunteers.

Laura Zusters





Celebrating the win with socially-distanced drink and nibbles with the neighbours

CECAL GREAT NEIGHBOUR AWARD JUDY FINLASON

Many of you have met Judy at her cottage on the walking track from Wollie Bluff to Turrella Reserve and have heard her stories about the Valley. She is a tireless advocate for the activities of WCPS and for the importance of saving this unique bushland for posterity. Her enthusiasm for our beautiful valley and knowledge of its history is infectious. You'll be pleased to hear that she recently won the Great Neighbour Award, presented by the Canterbury Earlwood Community Centre (CECAL). This award celebrates and recognises great neighbours and their neighbourhoods.

Abi Curtis from the WCPS Committee got together with Judy's neighbour Kitty in Jackson Place to nominate Judy for the award.

In the nomination Kitty said,

"I first met Judy when we moved to Jackson Place some years ago. She was sitting in her dormobile in the carpark at the end of the road, classical music playing, stringing up a 'loom' on an old iron bedstead for a forthcoming community event. Her idea was that children would weave leaves, ribbons and other scraps to create a communal work of art. After living in an apartment block in the Eastern Suburbs where inhabitants were hardly known to each other, I was glad to have such a person as a neighbour.

I have since discovered just how much of a contribution Judy has made and continues to make to her community. At events like the 'bat picnic' organised by the Wollie Creek Preservation Society, and other local events, Judy continues to oversee a big range of kids' crafts including paper kite making and the loom using things from the bush. At every event children go away happy with the things they have made, with help from Judy whose unobtrusive enthusiasm never seems to falter. She always talks directly and kindly to children, including my own, taking an unfeigned interest in their activities and schooling.

Judy is a passionate defender of the bushland around the Wollie Creek and makes it her business to tell passers-by on the Two Valley Trail the history of the bushland and how it was saved from destruction. Although she does not always mention it in her tales, she herself played a part in saving the bush from destruction. She is a valued keeper of stories about the locality. Some years ago she wrote a booklet about the history of Jackson Place, and she continues to tell interested walkers stories about the row of old houses in which she lives and the broader landscape around them - and in many cases it is she who creates the interest!

She tells passing walkers about the market gardens that used to be here, about Mr Jackson and his family, about the motorway that nearly was built through the valley, about native plant species, the birds of the area and many other things besides. She loves the place where she lives with a remarkable and infectious passion. Nothing seems to make her happier than to have increased someone else's understanding and love of the locality."



GHFF NUMBERS AT A MIDWINTER LOW BUT MIGHTY BAT MUMS RULE THE ROOST

The bats are back - but in only in small numbers. The August bat count recorded only 340 Flying Foxes flying out from camp at the end of the day for their nightly feeding, one of our lowest totals since we started counting in April 2008. The fly-out started very late around 6 pm, so it's possible some Flying Foxes were missed due to the darkness and some could have left even later. Almost no bats were counted at the Ron Gosling Reserve count location to the west.

The next count will be on Friday Sept 18.

Bec Williams, terrestrial ecologist and flying-fox camp manager with the Sutherland Shire Council, has written this interesting story about GHFF mums, using photos from our Turrella/Wolli Creek camp.

<https://www.urbanfieldnaturalist.org/stories/mighty-mums-rule-the-roost>

The [Urban Field Naturalist Project website](https://www.urbanfieldnaturalist.org) has a new project to get involved in. The Project Team includes Professor Dieter Hochuli, who was our Wolli Creek Preservation Society Annual Dinner guest speaker last year. They are inviting stories of about 200 words on the wildlife that exists all around us: in our backyards, on our balconies, in parks and in disused industrial areas. See stories that have already been submitted.

Deb Little



The Urban Field Naturalist Project

Wildlife exists all around us: in our backyards, on our balconies, in parks and disused industrial areas. The urban environment is home to a diverse array of other living creatures, from ants, spiders, and snails, to birds, possums, lizards, and even those wayward weeds emerging through cracks in the footpath. If we pay attention, each of them is an invitation into a unique and intricate mode of life, into an entire world of growth and decay, of communication and sensation, going on right under our noses.

In this time of social isolation, what could be better than taking a moment to learn a little more about the plants and animals we share our homes with? As our worlds are getting smaller, we make them bigger by paying attention to the details.



MEMBERSHIP

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

Direct Deposit Westpac BSB 032 067
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 SURNAME and RENEW in
 the description line

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

WCPS T-SHIRTS

If you would like a t-shirt
 please let us know



T Shirts are \$25 each
 Short and long sleeved

The order form is available at
[WCPS-T-shirt-Order-Form.pdf](#)
 or via our website/ About Us/ Support Us

We will be printing as soon as we have sufficient
 orders to make it financially viable.

CALENDAR

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| Bush Regeneration | September 5, 9, 13, 18, 19 October 3, 11, 14, 16, 17 November 7, 8, 11, 20, 21 December 5, 9, 13, 18, 19 Details via bushcare@wollicreek.org.au , website calendar or phone Georgina on 9957 2284. Always check in case of changes at short notice. |
| Bat Counting | Generally, 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 and come along to see the fly-out or join in the counting |
| Bird Surveys | Teams are doing regular monthly surveys of bird species and numbers present They work to their own timetable, but we can get you involved on a team if you contact birds@wollicreek.org.au |
| Committee Meetings | September 28, November 23 (AGM) Currently held by Zoom |
| Planning Meeting | February 23 Community Development Forum offices, Ground Floor, 11-13 Hartill-Law Avenue Bardwell Park. |
| Guided Walks and Surveys | None are currently planned, due to COVID-19 restrictions |

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All photos by Laura
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