



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

June 2021

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WOLLI CREEK PRESERVATION SOCIETY PRESENTS ODOUR CONTROL UNIT PETITION



Photos Jacqui Pike

WCPS members held a protest outside NSW Parliament House on May 13 against Sydney Water's plans to build an Odour Control Unit at Wolli Bluff in the Regional Park. The NSW Minister for Water Property and Housing, Melinda Pavey, failed to respond to an invitation to receive it in person.

We delivered our petition of 4019 signatures to Labour MPs Sophie Cotsis (Canterbury) and Jo Haylen (Summer Hill), who undertook to present it to the Minister.

See very short videos of the handover and placard routines on our [Youtube channel Wolli Creek Valley](#)





Photos Jacqui Pike

In February's Update we asked you to sign and promote a petition about the OCU location proposed by Sydney Water. WCPS members responded magnificently. Together, we:

- posted material on lots of social media sites
- letter-boxed a flyer into about 2,500 homes at the eastern end of the valley
- asked numerous environment and heritage groups to spread the word, which many did
- handed out the flyer at 9 railway stations
- set up passive or active flyer handouts at locations both within the Regional Park, and at outside venues such as Addison Road Markets and Gough Whitlam Reserve.

As a result, petition signatures reached 3,000 in three weeks from the Jan 20 launch. We sent a copy of the petition text to Minister Pavey on Feb 22, reporting the 3,300 who had signed by then. We passed 4,000 on 26 April, and the stats show that every time we went out to the public, the numbers pushed up in the dozens. Clearly we have not reached saturation, and can gain more if we need to. There is still a steady trickle rate of 1 or 2 per day if we do nothing! My crude calculations suggest that our 4,000 is equivalent to about 100,000 signatures across Australia on a national issue.

Lots of other things have been going on as well, and the details can be seen in an updated timeline at: [OCU and Regional Park 210509](#)

- Several direct representations to Minister Pavey
- Indirect representations made by five local MLAs (ALP and Green)
- Letters sent to Ministers Kean (Environment) and Stokes (Planning) where their portfolio responsibilities are involved in the issue
- Supporting motions were passed unanimously by each of the three local Councils (Canterbury Bankstown, Bayside, Inner West) with letters sent to Minister Pavey
- An application was made to the Heritage Office for an Interim Heritage Order to prevent construction. Read the application at [IHO application200122](#). Progressing this has been suspended by the Heritage Office, following Sydney Water's postponement of construction.

There are plans for more actions in the future. If you would like to take part, please let us know via info@wollicreek.org.au and we will keep you informed as things develop.

Peter Stevens



Photo Liz Millen

Labour MPs Sophie Cotsis (Canterbury) and Jo Haylon (Summer Hill) take photos before receiving the petition

Labour MPS Steve Kamper (Rockdale) and Chris Minns (Kogarah) drop in to show their support



Photo Deb Little

PLANTING DAY AT ILLOURA RESERVE

24 adults and 7 children came to Illoura Reserve on a sunny Sunday in April to lend a hand to plant an area of local provenance native tube stock at the western end of the Reserve. We planted, watered and mulched 530 diverse native grasses, shrubs and a small number of trees, grown by Marrickville Community Nursery. Through our local Federal member Linda Burney's Office, WCPS had applied for a grant for Wolli Creek Corridor Weed Removal, Planting, and Clean-Up, funded by the Communities Environment Program.

The ground was prepared by a professional team at the edge of a former planting by WCPS, which has done wonderfully well. The team also dug the many holes needed, making it easier for planting by our volunteers. This combination of volunteer and professional resources is a hallmark of the various grants WCPS has obtained over the years.

It was a great chance for volunteers to meet up and enjoy the beautiful weather and see how much can be achieved working together. Thanks for the practical help from Deb Little, Gina Svolos, Tim Pullen, Peter Stevens and others who lent a hand or brought food.

Georgina San Roque
WCPS Bushcare Coordinator

One of the volunteers, Louie, is a recent member. A fluent Cantonese and Mandarin speaker, Louie has taken Chinese community groups on walks through the Valley. "I've done weeding here in the past. I've moved more locally now, so now I am helping with planting for the first time. It's very satisfying!"

Flynn Mackenzie is 8¾. He and the other children made a snake out of the pots used for the seedlings. He reckons, "I counted the pots and there are 530!"



Louie and Peter take a break



Georgina oversees the planting



Flynn shows his pots

Photo Abi Curtis



CLEAN UP DAY 2021 BRAY AVE WETLAND GETS A CLEAN UP

The Bray Ave Wetland got a good clean up this year, with 9 volunteers working the bush at the edge of the footpath and the dense overgrown edge of the wetland. Thanks goes to Jakki Trembath, who organised the Bray Ave Clean Up, and her husband Ross for a welcome cup of tea and cake afterwards.

Clean Up Australia had 700,000 volunteers this year. Erin, a keen citizen scientist from Marrickville, said, “We’ve been seeing lots of mess and masks on the ground near the Cooks River and unfortunately we’re seeing lots of masks just thrown away here near Bardwell Park station.” Gayle, working near the far edge of the wetland, found mostly plastic water bottles or handballs. And lots of polystyrene.

Her daughter Eloise helped out for the morning, in spite of being “creeped out by slugs in here”. Gayle’s son Asher said, “We even found an abandoned shopping trolley. I’m going to get it out if I can.” And he did.

The Bray Ave wetland plants absorb excess nutrients from nearby drains and gutters, while the Gross Pollutant Trap, which was installed in 2010, reduces street rubbish and silt. WCPS restoration work on the Wetland began in 2003 and our bushcare volunteers, led by Georgina, continue to remove weeds from around the Wetland. It’s a great spot for birdwatching.

TOWARDS A LITTER-FREE COOKS RIVER

Community groups are making a concerted effort to tackle litter in the Cooks River catchment. An initiative of the River Canoe Club in association with the Cooks River Alliance and funded by the NSW EPA, the project seeks to identify sources of litter and litter hotspots in the catchment, and to develop strategies to address the problem.

A reference group involving Sydney Water, councils and community groups including WCPS, the CRVA and the Mudcrabs has held several workshops to share their knowledge and insights and practical ideas for reducing litter. Consultants engaged on the project are analysing litter data to find patterns and identify the underlying issues. An online forum was held on 17 March to share with the broader community the vision of “Towards a litter-free Cooks River” and the challenge: How do we reduce litter 50% by 2025?

The project will deliver a strategy and action plan to guide councils and community groups to target their activities more effectively to achieve real and lasting reductions in litter impacting on our local environment.

Tim Pullen



Maggie guides a May walk
Photo by fellow guide Ute Foster

JOIN US ON A WINTER WALK

JUNE 20, AUGUST 15 & AUGUST 22

During winter, the Society will be guiding leisurely morning discovery bush walks along the Wollie Creek Valley Walking Track.

Our volunteer walk leaders will share their knowledge of this bushland, its cultural and environmental history, as well as information about the current issues facing the Wollie Valley and the bush regeneration work the Society is undertaking. In August, the wildflowers will be coming out as well.

To give you a taste of what can be seen in the park, local photographer, David Noble, has put together this amazing [Slideshow of the Wollie Creek Regional Park](#) on YouTube.

Bookings are essential. Walks are very popular and places are limited. Further information about these walks is available in the calendar on the last page and on our website wollicreek.org.au/autumn-walks. To register for this walk, email info@wollicreek.org.au.

Walks are free to Wollie Creek Preservation Society members. Membership \$10 pa for an individual & \$15 for a family/household. For non-members the cost is \$10.00 per person. Preference given to members.

[Join the Wollie Creek Preservation Society here.](#)

Details on where to meet and walk information will be provided upon registration.

The Society hosted two guided autumn walks through the valley in April and May.

David came to the first walk, guided by Laura and Sarah. He's lived in Wollie Creek for four years and was amazed to discover the beautiful bushland. A highlight of the walk for the group was the climb up Nannygoat Hill. General consensus? "The view from the top is amazing!"

A highlight of both walks was a cup of tea and biscuits at Judy's cottage to hear about how the Wollie Creek Preservation Society started. The walks finished at Wollie Bluff, to look at the proposed site of the Sydney Water OCU.



Morning tea at Judy's
Photo by Maggie Aitkin



Meg makes tiny teats for feeding bottles



One of Meg's young charges hanging out with teddy



Picture by Philipp (@glanzpunkt) Royal Botanic Garden Sydney

MEG CHURCHES WINS WILDLIFE CARER AWARD

Long time Inner-West WIRES Bat Co-ordinator Meg Churches has won the Australian Wildlife Society's 2021 Wildlife Carer Award.

On behalf of WCPS, I had nominated Meg in recognition of the amazing work she does in the area of rescue and rehabilitation of Flying-foxes in particular, and for the great public education work she does via her [Youtube channel Megabattie](#).

Meg plays a significant public education role via this and other social media, like her [Facebook page Megabattieblue](#), in helping to combat negative stereotypes of & misinformation about bats and especially Flying-foxes, particularly during the current Covid pandemic. Meg has also been a Flying-fox counter with us, and in her spare time (as if!) she also makes products to support wildlife carers, such as fabric pouches & wraps, latex dummies and teats for bottles.

Meg was awarded not just a trophy and certificate, but also a \$1,000 cheque, which we hope will help with some of the personal financial costs that wildlife carers inevitably incur. I asked Meg about her acceptance speech at Parliament House in March, where Environment Minister Matt Keane was present, and she said, "They liked my speech and laughed in appropriate places. I got blisters on the soles of my feet from my high heels."

Deb Little
Bat Coordinator

WOLLI BATS ON THE ABC

ABC Everyday have posted an excellent video on [FFs in the Wollie Creek Valley on Facebook](#) called Bats in the City.

This terrific video stars Deb Little, Peter Stevens and, of course, the Wollie Creek Valley Flying-foxes.





Photo by Dave Noble

SURPRISE VISITORS A FIRST FOR WOLLI VALLEY

Little Red Flying-foxes visit Turrella/Wolli GHFF camp

For a short period from the end of March to around late April, we were surprised to see a small population of 200 to 300 Little Red Flying foxes present in the Wolli bat camp.

Over the years since our monthly counts began in April 2008, occasional Black flying-foxes have been spotted roosting with the Grey-headed FFs, because their range is moving southwards.

However, it was very unusual to see the Little Reds, as they tend to frequent more inland areas. They are also highly nomadic, have a wider distribution than other Flying-foxes, and are more specialised feeders, being more heavily dependent on nectar. Local Flying-fox experts don't know why they were being seen in Sydney camps and along the east coast at this time, and it's not necessarily a good sign.

The females give birth in late April to May, unlike the GHFF who give birth from around October on. A very distinctive feature of their roosting behaviour is their habit of clumping closely together, as Dave Noble's photo taken in the Wolli camp shows. [More info on Little Red Flying-foxes here.](#)

Deb Little
Bat Coordinator



National Recovery Plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox

Pteropus poliocephalus

RECOVERY PLAN FOR GHFF FINALLY FINISHED

The Recovery Plan for Grey-headed Flying-foxes finally eventuated 20 years after the species was listed as threatened under the EPBC Act. This is 15 years after the first draft of the Plan, agreed to by a large and varied recovery team, was provided to State agencies. A big thank you goes out to Peggy Eby and other scientists involved in the process. As Peggy has said, "It was a long hard road."

There is a wealth of information about Grey-headed Flying-foxes in the Plan, which is well worth reading. <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/recovery/grey-headed-flying-fox>





WOLLI BIRDO SURVEY TEAMS First Get Together in a Long Time

Members of several Wollli Valley survey teams had a welcome chance to catch up in March. Some people had never met before and enjoyed getting to know the other survey teams. Birdos enjoyed hearing stories of sightings from the other survey sites and there was a lot of enthusiasm for birds in the room. Several Birdos are also keen photographers. Sadly missed was Mary Foley, who used to host monthly Birdo meetings a few years ago, but couldn't make it due to a bad back.

Surveyors came not only to catch up but to hear Dorothy Luther, who manages our Wollli database, report on the current state of that database and plans to move it. After years of keeping records on pieces of paper, for the last five years most Wollli Birdos have been entering their survey data into the Atlas of Living Australia database, which is run by the CSIRO and contributes to information about wildlife and environment around Australia. However, unfortunately we have found it very difficult to search for data or get useful data out of the ALA for our own use.

Dorothy has connected with Birdlife Australia, who are focussed only on birds and have a more searchable database. She thinks their database would be a better fit for the Wollli Birdos. The birdos were full of ideas on how we could make the data more available to users of the valley and look forward to attending a database training session in the coming months.

Wollli Birdos have now set up a closed facebook page [Birds of Wollli Creek](#), so they can easily share photos and sightings with each other and keep the enthusiasm going.



Spangled Drongo at Bray Ave catches a bee. Photo by Lennis Lin



Collared Sparrowhawk in Gough Whitlam Reserve. Photo by Mark Mallone



Nankeen Night-heron in mangroves. Photo by Mark Mallone

Bray Ave wetland bushcare site

BUSHCARE TRAINING DAY with Georgina San Roque and Paul Ibbetson

Bushcare Training Day this year was a big success, with all 10 places taken by enthusiastic participants.

Paul Ibbetson, now retired, was the very active and dedicated NPWS Senior Field Officer for Wolli Creek Regional Park for many years. He gave a very informative talk on the Valley and the Society, plus gave a thorough Safety briefing. All participants had completed registration forms to be covered by insurance.

The group headed into the Bray Avenue bushland to see one of our best bushcare sites and to hear from Georgina about our approach to bush regeneration. They also got a rundown on the basics of using the existing native seed bank, working in stages, vegetation types and protecting wildlife habitat. The group looked at before and after photos of the site before bush regen work started.

Splitting into 3 groups, they concentrated on Tradescantia, Turkey Rhubarb and Ehrharta for one group, Flatweed and annuals for another and Lantana for the third group. Trainees got to it with a will and seemed pretty happy with the work. They swapped around to get an idea of different weeds, tools and techniques.

We gave out Two-Valley Trail leaflets for follow-up and later sent a May Bushcare bulletin to all. Several trainees have responded saying they would like to continue with bushcare. Some are already members of the Society. We are very grateful to Ute Foster for her help on the day.

Georgina San Roque
Bushcare Coordinator

WCPS MEMBER STORIES PUBLISHED at Urban Field Naturalist

Earlier this year WCPS members including bat counters had their wildlife stories published on the [Urban Field Naturalist](#) web site.

Bat counter Lani wrote [her story about a bat counting experience](#), called 'Just Don't Bite Them'. Other members and bat counters Valerie and Deb wrote stories about [Tawny Frogmouths](#) and [Ring-tailed Possums](#).

The Urban Field Naturalist project team - which includes WCPS Annual Dinner 2019 guest speaker Dieter Hochuli - are keen to receive more stories. So if you are a budding urban nature writer, have a go. They also welcome stories from children and young people. Have a look at the range of stories published to get a feel for the type of stories they are after.

Deb Little



Heritage hero's legacy lives on

This week, Sydney said goodbye to Jack Munday, the inspirational leader who saved much of Sydney's heritage ("Sydney mourns loss of visionary who saved the city", March 11). The variety of speakers at his memorial showed the scope of his influence and reminded us that the threat to our heritage and environment is always present. During the '80s and '90s I was one of many residents involved in a campaign to prevent the construction of a motorway through the Wolli Creek Valley, the last remaining bushland in south-west Sydney. We were successful, with the government promising that the valley would become a regional park. Although not directly involved, Munday was always there to give advice - keep up the fight and remain vigilant. Wise words as, once



again, residents of the valley fight to stop Sydney Water building infrastructure that will destroy bushland at the entrance to the park. Sydney has said farewell to Jack Munday, but his inspiring legacy remains.

Judith Finlason, Undercliffe

Thank you for your editorial on Munday, which concluded with "but if Munday proved one thing, it is that there are times when this city must stand up for its heritage and the preservation of all its

unique and beautiful history" ("Guardian of city's heritage was a man ahead of his time", March 11). I include the iconic Manly ferries in this history. Community outrage has saved just two. What will it take to right this travesty?

Jennifer Fergus, Manly

All credit to your editorial for admitting the *Herald*, along with the NSW government and developers, was once remiss in "viciously" opposing "militant trade unionist and communist Jack Munday". There may be a lesson there for modern society. The fact that Munday held the view that communism was ethically and morally the best system was no reason to cast doubt on the veracity of his aims.

Harry Polley, Dural

DID YOU KNOW?

91 WCPS MEMBERSHIPS LONGER THAN 10 YEARS

Long-time member Judy Finlason frequently writes to the Sydney Morning Herald and local papers to publicise our causes, like this excellent letter about the OCU.

A solid membership base is essential to protecting the wonderful Wolli Valley. Our members contribute in many different ways but all memberships are important. Some members are able to contribute actively to initiatives such as the regular bat counts and bird surveys, others come on board with campaigns like stopping the odour control unit. Many members quietly spread the word of this great urban bushland amongst their family and friends.

Having a strong number of members helps to demonstrate community support for the Wolli Valley and means decision makers are more likely to take notice of our concerns. So ALL membership is important, even if that is simply continuing to donate money or renew on a regular basis.

An inspiring 91 memberships, or 130 of our members, continue to renew their membership and have remained members for longer than 10 years!!

If you haven't already done so, please renew or check to see when you are due to renew by emailing membership@wollicreek.org.au. It is easy to renew: make a direct deposit to our account: BSB 032067 Account 288295. Please include your surname as ID.

Three-year membership fees are: \$30 individual; \$45 family or \$21 concession. Annual membership fees are \$10 individual, \$15 family or \$7 concession.

When you have paid, please email membership@wollicreek.org.au with:

- Your name
- Whether a family or individual membership
- Amount paid for membership fees
- Amount paid as a donation (if any)
- Updates, if any, to your contact details

Kate Flannery, Membership





The Wolli Creek Valley is known to have foxes and other feral animals, so it's important to keep a look out. Stacy Wilson, NPWS Ranger for La Perouse, Malabar & Wolli Creek RP, Sydney South Area, has sent through this information for WCPS members.

NEW FERAL CAT GLOVEBOX GUIDE

The Centre for Invasive Species Solutions has now released the Glovebox Guide to Managing Feral Cats, which contains practical information such as the pros and cons of current feral cat control techniques. Order hardcopies or download a free digital version from the [PestSmart website order form](#).

PRINTED RESOURCES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

The FeralScan team has a small number of printed PestSmart Glovebox Guides for Managing Feral Pigs, Foxes, Rabbits, and Wild Dogs, and some copies of a Feral Deer Identification brochure that are available on request. Email us for more details at feralscan@feralscan.org.au.

FERALSCAN FEEDBACK SURVEY (COMING SOON)

FeralScan is a free community resource and we are keen to hear your feedback and recommendations for the future. In the coming months, we will invite you to participate in a short 5-minute survey about FeralScan, giving you the chance to help decide the future of this resource. Your involvement will be greatly appreciated.

IS YOUR FERALSCAN APP UP-TO-DATE?

Download version 1.48 from the [Apple store](#) or version 1.47 from the [Google store](#).

HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

If you require assistance with FeralScan, please contact us via feralscan@feralscan.org.au or visit the [Feralscan website](#) for further details.



The Big Wet Weekend in March. Wolli Creek breaks its banks at Turrella Reserve.

MEMBERSHIP

Family Three Years \$45

Individual Three Years \$30

Concession Three Years \$21

Group Membership \$30 p.a.

Direct Deposit Westpac BSB 032 067
WCPS Inc 288295, with your
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

Bush Regeneration

June 5, 9, 13, 18, 19

July 3, 11, 14, 16, 17

August 7, 8, 11, 20, 21

September 4, 8, 12, 17, 18

Details via bushcare@wollicreek.org.au, website calendar or phone Georgina
on 8958 4801. Always check in case of changes at short notice.

Please Note: Stotts Reserve Bushcare every fourth Saturday of the month

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

Regular monthly surveys of bird species and numbers present

Teams work to their own timetable, but we can get you involved in a team
if you contact birds@wollicreek.org.au

Committee Meetings

July 26, September 27

Currently held bi-monthly by Zoom

If interested to attend please contact info@wollicreek.org.au

Guided Walks

Sunday June 20 9am

Bexley North to Turrella Reserve with Gina Svolos and Deb Little

Sunday August 15 9am - Struggles and Campaigns

Nannygoat Hill to Wolli Bluff with Peter Stevens

Sunday August 22 9am - Wildflower Walk

With Deb Little

Bookings essential. Free for members. Contact info@wollicreek.org.au

EDITOR & LAYOUT: LAURA ZUSTERS

All photos by Laura unless otherwise credited

See previous issues at
wollicreek.org.au/publications/update-newsletter

Wolli Creek Preservation Society
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