



**RHHFFPS**

# Wallumetta

Newsletter of the Ryde-Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna  
Preservation Society Inc.

Website: <http://rydehffps.org.au/>

Member of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC)  
and founding member of the Powerful Owl Coalition

No. 300

**JUNE**

**2023**

*We acknowledge the Wallumedegal, original inhabitants of the Ryde – Hunters Hill area.*

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

There is some good news to report following the recent Field of Mars Consultative Committee meeting.

This meeting includes representatives from Ryde Council, the Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre (EEC) and the management committee of the Society. The Consultative Committee discusses management issues for the Field of Mars Reserve and there are two important matters to report.

The first is a grant obtained by Ryde Council of \$848,000 and allocated to the "Field of Mars Nature Trail Improvement Project", scheduled for completion by 24 December 2023. This includes new pathways, upgrade of existing pathways, disability parking, water station, teaching areas and signage. It also includes bike racks where cyclists may lock their bicycle before entering the Reserve on foot.

The management committee will consult actively with Ryde Council and the EEC as the project plans are developed to ensure that the natural heritage is enhanced by the project.

The second important matter is the saltmarsh management plan. Saltmarsh is an endangered ecological community and can be found in the Field of Mars Reserve. Recently Ryde Council conducted an investigation of the status of saltmarsh located in the Ryde local government area and the report was discussed at the Consultative Committee meeting. This included a walk to inspect the saltmarsh areas in the Reserve.

A plan will now be developed in consultation with the EEC prioritising actions according to effectiveness and budget. This will be discussed with Ryde Council.

Working cooperatively with Ryde Council and the EEC to protect and enhance the natural heritage of the Field of Mars Reserve is a primary focus for the Society and these two initiatives are encouraging.

*Frank Breen,*

*President*

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## COMING EVENTS:

### Sunday 18 June 2023, 2pm-4.30pm – Field of Mars Reserve Heritage Walk

Phillip Ward will share his first-hand knowledge of the Reserve over the last 70 years, and lead a walk to see remnants of various activities in the Reserve since European settlement. The walk will conclude with afternoon tea at the Visitor Centre, when there will be a chance to chat informally and ask questions.

### Sunday 16 July 2023, 10 am & 2pm – Winter Wildflower Walks

It's amazing how many wildflowers we see in the Reserve during winter. This is really the perfect time of year to see many species of colourful native flowers in our bushland.

### Sunday 17 September 2023 (provisional date) – "Music on Mars"

We are planning a spectacular event! Watch for more details closer to the date.

## DATES WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS:

# A Non-Plastic Future for Community Ovals

Synthetic -v- Natural Turf. Get the facts from the experts

## 23 June 2023 Community Forum

7.15pm to 9.00pm  
Ku-ring-gai Town Hall  
118 Pacific Hwy Pymble

**MC/Forum Curator**  
Kristyn Haywood  
DIRECTOR, PEOPLE FOR SUCCESS  
INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FOR  
WAHROONGA, NSW STATE  
ELECTION 2023

**Guest Speakers include**

 <b>Dr Elizabeth Farrelly</b> NSW UPPER HOUSE CANDIDATE 2023 COLUMNIST, AUTHOR	 <b>Jill Green</b> PRESIDENT OF STEP ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP	 <b>Dr Scott Wilson</b> CHIEF SCIENTIST EARTHWATCH INSTITUTE	 <b>Dr Mick Battam</b> SOIL SCIENTIST AND SPORTS TURF SPECIALIST AG ENVIRO SOLUTIONS	 <b>Dr Paul Lamble</b> PRINCIPAL, PEAK WATER CONSULTING DRAINAGE SPECIALIST	 <b>Richard Pike</b> PRESIDENT MOSMAN FOOTBALL CLUB
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## [Get Tickets](#)

### PURPOSE OF THIS COMMUNITY FORUM:

- To provide evidence-based information that upgrading sports fields with natural turf is the best choice for players, the environment, and the community.
- To provide evidence of the environmental, health, and safety dangers of plastic turf.
- Present the facts about how the processes used by the Ku-ring-gai Council to proceed with the construction of a synthetic turf field at Norman Griffiths Oval lacked proper environmental assessments and thorough community consultation.
- Provide an opportunity to ask the scientists, experts, and community members' questions.
- Outline recommendations and suggest actions to ensure proper Governance.

Doors will open at 7.00 pm for a 7.30pm start; expect to finish by 9.00 pm. Bring your own refreshments and a jacket with you. It could get cold. The forum is free to the community, but donations will be appreciated.

**CODE OF CONDUCT:** The issue of synthetic -v- natural turf fields can be contentious. Come prepared to be direct and respectful.

**KIDS:** This is a forum that would be great for kids over 10. Lots of interesting science will be presented.

***We expect the event to be booked out so if you decide later on you cannot make it please cancel your tickets.***

## City of Ryde Council Have Your Say - Closing 8 June 2023:

### FOOD SCRAPS RECYCLING SERVICE



City of Ryde Council is exploring the possibility of introducing a Food Scraps Recycling Service (also known as Food Organics, Garden Organics or FOGO) as part of their domestic waste management provisions. The NSW EPA Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (WASM) requires that councils provide food and garden waste collections to all NSW households by 2030.

The Food Scraps Recycling Service would replace the existing green waste service and include the collection of food scraps and garden organics, which will then be processed into compost.

Residents of Ryde are invited to provide feedback on your thoughts of this proposal and willingness to pay for this service as part of the existing Domestic Waste Management Charge. Go to <https://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/HaveyourSay/Have-Your-Say/Food-Scraps-Recycling-Service>

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE FIELD OF MARS

### WILDLIFE

Not much has happened over the past two months. We had the usual visitors' reports of seeing swamp wallabies, water dragons and waterbirds. Leaf curl spiders have been spinning webs across the walking tracks in many places. They are now at the end of their life and laying their eggs in leaf packets ready for the next generation to hatch when spring arrives. A regular walker recently rescued a young magpie which was evidently unable to leave the ground where it had landed. Probably abandoned by parents, it raises the question: are they are breeding at this time of year?

### BUSHCARE

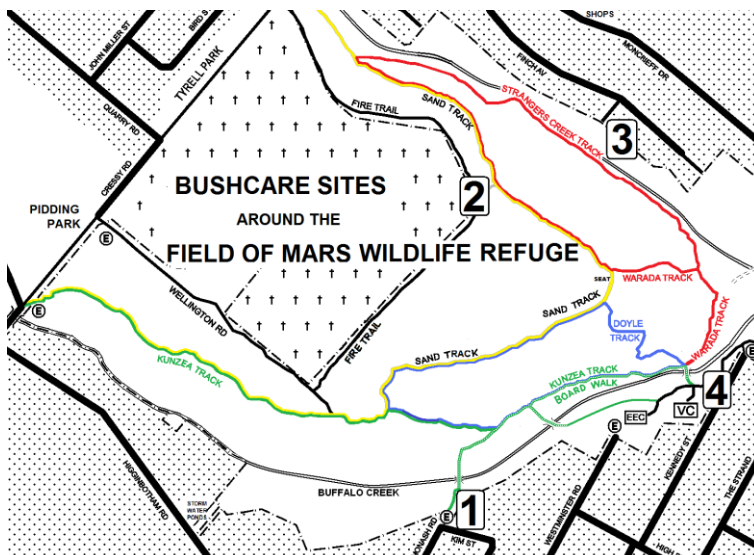
The Streamwatch water sampling has yielded pleasing results. Even when the creek water appears to be polluted, it turns out to be relatively free of toxins. And we appreciate the efforts of some of our volunteers in removing plastic bags, containers and other rubbish from tracks and wet areas.

New members are welcome in all our teams – phone the City of Ryde Council on 9952 8222 and tell them you would like to volunteer. All necessary training is provided on-the-job.

Within the Reserve itself volunteers meet regularly at four sites, subject to weather conditions:

1. Monash Road – meets weekly on Tuesdays, 9am-11am
2. Cemetery Creek 2 – meets weekly on Thursdays, 6.30am-9.30am
3. Strangers Creek – meets monthly on the third Sunday of the month, 9.00am-11.00am
4. Kennedy Street – meets monthly on the last Saturday of the month, 9.00am-11.00am.

Contractors engaged by Council (currently Dragonfly Environmental) manage other areas in the Reserve.





## VISITOR CENTRE

With lots else happening, we held no special events in April. However, we saw an average of around 80 passers-by on each day when we are open; slightly more during the Easter holidays. Up to a quarter of these came into the Visitor Centre for maps and information.

On the day before Anzac Day (even though it was at the end of the school holidays), we did not



officially open but during that day we hosted a visit by members of the Eastwood Garden Club. They were interested to see that garden plants become weeds in bushland areas, and to learn that some plants regarded as garden weeds are in fact valued native plants! The club made a donation in appreciation of our hospitality.

During Anzac Day itself we saw over 180 visitors to the Reserve, of whom over 50 came in to the Centre, seeking maps and other information.

As a result of a storm on the last weekend of April a large tree fell near the boardwalk seat junction, dislocating five panels. Fortunately breakages seemed to be confined to the clips holding the horizontal bearers and decking. Between the footbridge near the Visitor Centre and the seat junction, the boardwalk was closed pending repair work. We thank the City of Ryde Council for acting promptly to have this done so, happily, the boardwalk is open once again.

**JOIN OUR VISITOR CENTRE TEAM!** to keep the Visitor Centre open 9am-5pm on weekends and public holidays. Our roster of 4-hour shifts is negotiated according to members' availability. No specialised skills are required, and Alfred happily provides the training needed.

Most visitors' questions are answered in the maps and range of free leaflets we have available.

## NSW ELECTION RESULTS – A PROMISING FUTURE

Many groups – inspired by organisations including the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and the Invasive Species Council (ISC) – campaigned in various ways to ensure natural environments were recognized as issues to be addressed by an incoming NSW Government.

According to the NCC, the incoming Labor government pledged to:

- Fully implement the Murray Darling Basin Plan
- Establish the Great Koala National Park
- Stop the destruction of pristine Blue Mountains World Heritage area that raising the Warragamba Dam would have caused
- Boost funding for clean energy, legislate emissions reductions targets and support the electrification of households.

The NCC will continue to press for establishment of the Great Koala National park, and for action to wind back the water theft from floodplain harvesting and limit destruction by Forest Corp NSW.

Incoming Environment Minister Penny Sharpe failed to rule out new coal and gas mines and, unlike her colleagues in Victoria and Western Australia, she refuses to end native forest logging.

# TOTAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE NSW ELECTION SCORECARD 2023

	 LIBERAL	 Labor	 THE GREENS
<b>SCIENCE-BASED CLIMATE ACTION AND ENERGY TRANSITION</b>	 No change. Current policies did have positive results on emissions reduction, offshore wind, hydrogen strategy & energy efficiency in low income and new homes (BASIX). No to independent review process of targets & progress.	1/2 Agreed independent Net-Zero Commission, legislate emission reduction targets, improve access to energy efficiency in social housing, a gas road map, + offshore wind strategy.	 Agreed to phase out coal and gas by 2030; 100% renewable energy, just transition for workers, science-based climate plans and boost clean energy.
<b>TEC KOALA POLICY + GREAT KOALA NP</b>	 No change. Current policies exclude a Great Koala National Park + did not agree to remove development loopholes leading to habitat removal	1/2 Agreed to Great Koala National Park (post consultations), protect wildlife corridors on all land tenures; faster gazettal of Georges River Koala National Park + strengthen environmental protections, stop run away land clearing & fix the biodiversity offset scheme	 Stop clearing of Koala habitat, introduction of a Koala Protection Bill with clear powers that prohibits the destruction of Koala habitat + \$1bill land acquisition fund.
<b>HABITAT &amp; BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION</b>	 Will NOT end native forest logging, nor reduce land clearing rates. Will raise the Warragamba Dam wall. Supports improvements to the offsets scheme + will obtain advice on how to contribute to 30/30 land target.	1/2 Will NOT agree to end native forest logging. Intends to fix the biodiversity offsets scheme - make them a last resort. Will not raise the Warragamba Dam wall. Will contribute to the 30/30 land target.	 Support ending native forest logging; reducing land clearing to below 2016 levels; and protect a minimum of 30% of land and water by 2030.
<b>WASTE AND RECYCLING (WITH BOOMERANG ALLIANCE)</b>	1/2 Will review more single use plastic bans + support reform packaging regulation by 2025. Will implement preference recycled content products + develop Protection of Environment Policy	1/2 Will review more single use plastic bans + support incorporating more recycled products in government procurement and expanding Return & Earn to other containers.	 Detailed list of single use items to be banned incl. heavyweight bags & coffee cups + mandate procurement targets for recycled plastic content, support plastic free programs & microplastic reduction strategies.
<b>URBAN PLANNING / GREEN SPACE</b>	 Does NOT commit to sustainable urban planning (no Design & Place SEPP reinstatement: tree retention + urban heat mitigation), Blue-Green space grid, NOR neutral/beneficial effect test on Sydney water catchment (NorBE) on development. Upgraded BASIX, + will continue tree planting.	1/2 Net Zero Commission will develop plans for urban development + work with the Blue-Green Grid committee (Greater Sydney Parklands Act). Will complete Wolli Creek RP. Made NO commitments on NorBE on development.	 Reinstate Design and Place SEPP and NorBE on development, Create the Sydney Blue-Green Grid, maintain mature tree canopy, prohibit the sale of parkland and ensure protection from adjoining developments.
<b>RIVERS AND WETLANDS</b>	 NO meaningful commitments	1/2 Will work to address over-allocation of water resources in the Murray Darling Basin + its full implementation	 Commit to achieving the water recovery targets in the Murray-Darling Basin, Fix the cap on the "drought of record", Improve First Nations access to water.
<b>OCEANS</b>	 The government made no meaningful commitments.	1/2 The ALP will work with the Commonwealth to achieve 30% marine protected areas by 2030.	 Support Meeting the 30-by-30 target of marine waters in sanctuary zones on a bioregional basis. Including a Sydney Marine Park and ban offshore exploration and mining of fossil fuels.

For more details, see

[https://www.tec.org.au/nsw\\_state\\_election\\_2023\\_environmental\\_policy\\_scorecard](https://www.tec.org.au/nsw_state_election_2023_environmental_policy_scorecard)

## Invasive Species Council reports...

At the NSW election, we won many commitments including urgently reducing feral horse numbers and 100 new national parks staff focused on invasive species.

Incoming Labor government commitments achieved are:

- Ramping up efforts to reduce feral horse numbers in Kosciuszko National Park as quickly as possible, including more resources to dramatically reduce feral horse numbers
- 100 new National Parks and Wildlife Service roles specifically to control and eradicate invasive species... for protecting biodiversity in NSW National Parks and Reserves
- Developing a 'permitted list' approach to help stop the sale of weedy plants through nurseries
- Undertaking a Treaty making process with First Nations peoples which includes a commitment to examining a role of a Commissioner for Country through that process
- A Biosecurity Commission and a state-wide audit of the impact of invasive species on NSW's environment and agriculture
- \$10 million to tackle weeds and pests on government land neighbouring private property
- Commitments to reviewing the *Companion Animals Act* to ensure it is fit for purpose to protect wildlife from roaming pet cats.

There were strong cross bench commitments, including from the Greens and independent Wagga Wagga member Dr Joe McGirr, whose electorate covers the western portion of Kosciuszko National Park. He is calling for the repeal of the feral horse protection legislation and supports calls for a Commissioner for Country along with statewide feral deer and pig coordinators.

ISC says there is still much more to be done, including more funding and staff for invasive species management and biosecurity, especially with new threats such as red fire ants on NSW doorstep. And NSW needs to catch up with other states when it comes to responsible cat ownership.

## MORE SACRED SITE ROCK ART AT RISK... AND MORE

**In 2020, Rio Tinto blasted Juukan Gorge, destroying a 46,000 year old sacred site.**

**Now, this could happen again at MIDDLE ARM in the Northern Territory.**

The expansion of Middle Arm's gas hub could cause irreversible harm to cultural artefacts, stories, and dreaming, yet Labor is promising to **fund the gas hub with over \$1.9 billion**.

Traditional Owners, Larrakia people, say that it is close to some of the only remaining Larrakia rock art, and are calling out the project and lack of consultation.

The Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) are objecting to the Australian Government's big investments in the gas industry, and ask that we email Treasurer Jim Chalmers – link: <https://aycc.good.do/contact-chalmers/email-jim/> – to send a loud and clear message.

After the Juukan Gorge destruction, Labor committed to new Indigenous heritage protections designed to protect sites like this from future damage, but now, Larrakia people are saying they have not even been consulted.

**Public money should fund things that matter to our communities** like clean and affordable renewable energy, investing in building strong public services like healthcare and education, and support for those already hit hard by climate change.

Instead, that money is going into a risky gas project that threatens a repeat of Juukan Gorge.



*Remains of Juukan Gorge Rock Art – photo by ABC*



## DEFENDING COUNTRY AGAINST ADANI

**News and photos from Adrian Burragubba, Senior Custodian:  
Nagana Yarrbayn Wangan & Jagalingou Cultural Custodians**

Ceremonial grounds on Country at Waddananggu continue to thrive as we have established our second camp at Gamu Yuna Warba (an important free flowing spring), away from the noise and toxic dust of Adani's mine pit. We have two sacred camps now – representing the fire and water elements of our peoples. Both camps sustain a sacred fire. This extends our continuous occupation and ceremony on our traditional lands, opposite Adani's coal mine, to [now over 600] days. **We are still here, and still going strong.**



Gamu Yuna Warba is a beautiful, green spring system teeming with birdlife, a few kilometres north of Adani's mine. My son, Gurridyula, has also established a secondary Yarrbayn Buri (sacred fire) sourced from our original fire. This is to protect our ceremony and ensure they never go out, as a fire is seen as the purest form of occupation. We now have two fires burning continuously.

Our ceremonies and culture, our laws and lore, are at the heart of our protection of Country and our continued resistance in the face of Adani's destruction. This is so important to us. It is our life, it is who we are, and it literally embodies our rights as First Nations people.



Recently we held a sacred water ceremony at Gamu Yuna Warba. Through this ceremony we connected my newborn grandson, Charlie, to Country and our sacred Doongmabulla Springs for the first time. Charlie is named after my great-grandfather, and he will carry that name for our family.

As part of our ancient tradition, Gurridyula made a Coolamon to carry Charlie in at Waddananggu, to signify being one with trees and nature.

**This is part of our way of life since the beginning of time. It is intrinsic to who we are and is threatened by Adani's expanding coal mine.** A mine we have opposed from day one; a mine we never consented to.

This is well known... International UN agencies, banks, insurers, and Australian governments of all persuasions know this. Adani knows this but continues its propaganda war against us to cover over the fact that a mining lease was issued by the State **without free, prior and informed consent.**

By practising our important fire and water ceremonies on Country, we assert our human rights as defined and protected under the *Human Rights Act (Qld)*, and international law including *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and *The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*.

Our cultural rights are protected but we must practise them as a means of caring for and protecting our Country, and to hold our ground against Adani. Not only do we assert our rights through our culture, but we continue to act to enforce them legally. We have a team of lawyers working with us to safeguard our cultural heritage and defend our human rights, which continue to be breached by the actions of the State Government and Adani.

Our lawyers attended our recent water ceremony to help them understand the importance of our presence on Country and why we assert our rights in the face of grave threats from Adani and their supporters. We are initiating further legal action to defend our cultural heritage, our sacred springs, and our right to be on Country, as Adani moves to expand the mine and mounts a new wave of pressure and threats upon us.

## METHANE EMISSIONS FROM COAL MINES

Coal mines in NSW are flying under the radar, pumping methane gas into our atmosphere at an alarming and increasing rate. But it's complicated to measure and report on methane, and the NSW government counted on that confusion to get away with doing nothing.

Methane is a dangerous greenhouse gas that is 84 times worse than carbon dioxide for the climate in the short-term, but the NSW Environmental Protection Agency does not treat it as a pollutant.



*Camberwell Ashton Mine in the Hunter Valley – aerial photo by Lock The Gate Alliance*

Huge amounts of methane are released by coal miners directly into the atmosphere every year; seeping from underground mines as well as open-cut coal mines; yet the CSIRO has already developed ground-breaking technology to deal with this.

It's time to treat methane for what it is - a serious pollution problem - and with a new, incoming NSW Labor Government we have an opportunity to get this huge issue on top of their agenda.

Problems with coal mine pollution will be even bigger if the 8 new coal mine expansions proposed in NSW this year are developed. Although NSW is closing down its coal-fired electric power stations, our coal mines continue to operate to supply overseas markets.

The problem with coal mine methane is so big, that the NSW Government predicts that coal mining will be the only sector in NSW that increases annual greenhouse emissions between now and 2030, while every other sector will be on a downward trajectory.

We can't accept that the biggest cause of global climate change should be getting the easiest ride to keep on polluting as usual while the rest of our economy takes action to decarbonise.

On paper, the law requires coal miners to take action to reduce emissions. In reality, our previous government *pretended* to enforce the law and the coal industry *pretended* to reduce emissions, and things just got worse.

See [https://lockthegate.good.do/coal\\_emissions/mps/](https://lockthegate.good.do/coal_emissions/mps/) in which Lock The Gate Alliance has put together a short explainer video and a template for a letter which they recommend we send to our NSW members of parliament.

## TOONDAH FEATURED ON THE ABC 7.30 REPORT - 5 MAY 2023



*Toondah Wetlands – photo published in The Guardian*

Peter McCutcheon reported on what the controversial Walker Corporation proposal means for precious Critically Endangered Eastern Curlews and for a local community, who are opposed to the development. For further information, see <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-04-25/proposed-development-on-protected-wetlands-at/102265270>

We have already covered this issue, most recently in *Wallumetta* December 2022.



## NEWS FROM BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA

### Disease among seabirds: the dire effects of ingesting plastic debris become clear

It's well known that many species of seabirds ingest huge amounts of plastic while foraging out at sea, but a recent study has discovered the plastic they consume is actually responsible for a newly described internal disorder — **PLASTICOSIS**.

Seabirds are attracted to plastic as they mistake it for their prey. Once it's been eaten, pieces of plastic remain in the digestive tract of the bird, as plastic is undigestable, and it's also difficult to regurgitate. This is known to cause starvation among seabirds, as it becomes increasingly difficult to feed effectively when they are full of bits of plastic debris.

A decade ago, the world was shocked when research revealed that Flesh-footed Shearwaters on Lord Howe Island — generally considered a rather pristine environment — had ingested high amounts of plastic as they foraged. Now, a team of scientists from institutions across the world under the banner of 'Adrift Lab' conducted a recent study on Lord Howe Island's Flesh-footed Shearwaters, and found that the plastic ingested by these shearwaters has spawned a previously unknown disease. Known as *plasticosis*, it is caused by sharp pieces of plastic continually digging in to the bird's digestive tract, which inflames delicate internal tissues.

Occasional damage would heal naturally, but when the tissue is repeatedly punctured and inflamed over time, the wound is prevented from healing and the scarring becomes permanent. Further ingestion of plastic debris results in excessive amounts of scar tissue forming, which reduces the flexibility of the internal tissues of the digestive tract, making it difficult to digest real food. This results in profound effects on the bird's rate of growth and, ultimately, its survival.

Plasticosis is difficult to detect without internal examination, as birds suffering from the ailment often appear outwardly healthy. Without a much wider investigation, the global extent of the disease is unknown. Logically it will almost certainly afflict a huge range of marine lifeforms right around the world, as over a thousand marine species are known to ingest plastic debris.

### Cuisses De Crapauds on the Menu

Since introduction to Queensland in the 1930s, the spread of cane toads across Australia has been an ecological disaster. Because they have no natural predators, along with toxins in their skin to deter would-be assailants, their range expanded largely unhindered for nearly 90 years.

A few native Australian animals have latterly found ways to eat them without being poisoned.



Image from The Guardian

The list includes several native birds, including Black Kites, Whistling Kites, Torresian Crows and Purple Swamphens. The latest addition to the list is the Australian White Ibis.

Renowned for their flexibility and opportunism when it comes to finding food, White Ibis have turned their attention towards the plentiful amphibians, leading some to discover how to eat a cane toad. It's called the 'stress-and-wash method', allowing the toad to be swallowed whole, rather than picking at their tongues or particular internal organs, as other birds do.

"It's quite different from other native species and their methods of eating them," said Emily Vincent, Invasive Species Manager at Watergum. "The ibis pick up cane toads and they flick them about and stress out the toads... It makes the cane toads release toxins from the parotid gland at the back of their neck, which is their defence mechanism when they're faced with predators. After this [the ibis] either wipe the toads in the wet grass, or they go down to a water source nearby, and they rinse the toads out. This is a learned behaviour and it's been observed in multiple different regions..." she said.

## NILPENA EDIACARA NATIONAL PARK

60,000-hectares have been proclaimed as a national park, containing one of the world's most important fossil sites due to the unique preservation of complex animal life. It has significant biodiversity value and aims to protect both the current native landscape and the area's globally unique window into the absolute depths of time. In 2021, the Australian Government placed the Flinders Ranges on Australia's tentative list for World Heritage and the international significance of Nilpena's fossil discoveries is fundamental in securing a formal listing slated for 2025.



The Friends of National Parks and Wildlife (FNPW) organisation was instrumental and supportive of this latest proclamation and project.

### **Project overview**

On June 17, 2021, the Nilpena Ediacara National Park was proclaimed, marking the creation of a brand new 60,000 hectare national park on the Flinders Ranges. The park was established in association with the [Flinders Ranges Ediacara Foundation](#), the [South Australian Government](#), and the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife (FNPW). The Nilpena Ediacara National Park is recognised as the richest and most diverse Ediacaran fossil site on Earth. It contains unique fossils of an early record of animal life (known as Ediacaran) evidenced by on-site research undertaken over the past 30 years.

### ***The Ediacaran Period***

This region is the only place in the Southern Hemisphere to have a geological time period named for it – the Ediacaran Period, in honour of the Ediacara Hills of the Flinders Ranges. This became the first new geological period declared by the International Union of Geological Sciences in 120 years. It spans 94 million years from the end of the Cryogenian Period to the beginning of the Cambrian Period.

### ***Significance of Nilpena's Fossil Discoveries***

Scientists believe that this is the place from which all animal life as we know it originated. This region was once the sea floor, and it contains strange early life forms some half a billion years old that have been exquisitely preserved in the fine sandstone grain. The great naturalist Sir David Attenborough visited Nilpena and made the BBC documentary 'First Life' there.

### ***Biodiversity and Conservation***

Nilpena Ediacara National Park has also significant biodiversity value, containing two threatened ecological communities (River Red Gum woodland and Mulga low woodlands). It also contains 44 species of native animals and 111 species of native plants. FNPW's goal is to protect both the current native landscape and the animals that live there, but also an area that provides a globally unique window into the absolute depths of time.

### ***Continued Research and Protection***

Nilpena will continue to be a working research site with discoveries promoting science as a key part of reinforcing the ongoing need to protect and care for Nilpena. The Australian Government placed the Flinders Ranges on Australia's tentative list for World Heritage in April 2021, and the international significance of Nilpena's fossil discoveries are fundamental in securing a formal listing slated for 2025. The World Heritage nomination of the Flinders Ranges will contain two sites on Nilpena Ediacara National Park, the excavated Nilpena fossil site and Ediacara Hill. With the establishment of Nilpena Ediacara National Park, we can ensure that this land and its unique heritage are protected and preserved for future generations, celebrated, and shared throughout the world.

### **THURLOO DOWNS: LARGEST ACQUISITION IN NSW NATIONAL PARKS HISTORY**



*Photo: NSW Environment and Heritage*

Thurloo Downs is in the state's far north-west, between Bourke and Tibooburra. At almost twice the size of Australian Capital Territory, it is to become the largest acquisition of private land by the NSW Government for national parks in NSW.

The property contains exceptional biodiversity values, protecting landscapes and ecosystems not found in any other national park. These habitats support an array of threatened species, including black falcon, flock bronzewing (pigeon), bustard, stripe-faced dunnart and woma python.

It includes a complex network of rivers, salt lakes and floodplains with billabongs and waterholes, fringed with coolabah trees. A mosaic of woodlands with long parallel sand dunes transitions into sandplains and gibber country.

There is extensive Aboriginal cultural heritage with evidence of artefacts and other items of significance across the property. National Parks and Wildlife Service will work with the Aboriginal community to protect these important cultural sites.

Thurloo will transition to a national park over the next 2 years as the pastoral operation winds down. For more information, see <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/parks-reserves-and-protected-areas/establishing-new-parks-and-protected-areas/new-parks-and-changes-to-parks/thurloo-downs>



## NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

Please pay by direct transfer to our Bendigo account: RYDE HUNTERS HILL FLORA AND FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC, BSB 633-000, Account number 190716589.

Include your name in the transaction description, and email your name, address and phone number to [rhffps@gmail.com](mailto:rhffps@gmail.com)

Alternatively, you may pay by cash or cheque. Complete and hand in this form with payment in a sealed envelope at the Field of Mars Visitor Centre or post to: RHHFFPS, PO Box 552, Gladesville 1675.

NAME:

Address:

Phone:

Annual Membership (add \$10 for newsletter to be sent via Australia Post):

\$

Individual \$ 15 ( + \$ 10 )

Family \$ 35 ( + \$ 10 )

Concession \$ 10 ( + \$ 10 )

(Students/Pensioners) Donation

**Total Payment:**

**Email address - please print clearly:**

## WIN A NEW YARNKNIT\* RUG IN WARM NATURAL COLOURS!

**Tickets \$2 each / 3 for \$5** – at the Visitor Centre...

or pay to Bendigo Bank account:

RYDE HUNTERS HILL FLORA AND FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY,  
BSB 633-000, Account number 190716589.

Put "Raffle" + your name and phone number in the comment, and we will then make the tickets for you.

Proceeds support the work of our Society.



The winning ticket will be drawn at our Society's next Annual General Meeting.

\* Hand knitted and kindly donated by members of the Holy Spirit Yarnknit Group.