



# Eucryphia

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Robertson Environment Protection Society – to promote the protection and enhancement of the Robertson Environment  
PO Box 3045, Robertson NSW 2577 [www.reps.org.au](http://www.reps.org.au)

## Next REPS Meeting Friday 3rd April 2009 at 7:30pm at the Robertson Community Centre

### FORD KRISTO

#### A Talk in Two Parts

- The Gulp Rd and Dingo Rd Section 44 Fires 2009
- “Taking Pretty Pictures While the Earth Goes to Hell in a Handcart.”

Ford will speak about the Dingo Road and Gulp Road Section 44 fires at Bundanoon and Mount Budawang in January and February, 2009. In 2003 Ford was awarded the National Medal for firefighting and has been a bushfire fighter for over 25 years. Roles in firefighting include: air observer/navigator, crew leader, divisional commander, and planning officer. His talk will outline new firefighting technologies using heat-sensing systems and intensive use of aircraft.



Photo: Ford Kristo



Photo: Ford Kristo

The second part of Ford’s talk is entitled “Taking pretty pictures while the Earth goes to Hell in a Handcart”. Ford Kristo is a professional wildlife photo-journalist and nature photographer; he is currently a local Ranger with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. His awards include:

1987 BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year:  
“World in our hands”: First Prize

1988 BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year:  
High Commendation

2008 BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year:  
Semi-finalist

Ford has had his images published in magazines and books worldwide. He will discuss nature photography in a changing world. This will not be a talk for the faint of heart.

**All welcome. Active discussion. Light supper (Gold coin donation)**

## Upcoming Events

Sat 28<sup>th</sup> March – Community Nursery Working Bee and see page 4 for other Landcare events.

Sat 28<sup>th</sup> March – Caalang Creek Working Bee – 9:30am onwards. Page 4

Thu 2nd April – Australian Plants Society Talk by Kyril Taylor, 7:30pm, CWA Hall, Moss Vale. Page 4

Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> April – REPS Talk - Ford Kristo Bushfires and Nature Photography at 7:30pm, Community Centre.

Sun 12<sup>th</sup> April – Vintage Car Day – 10:00am at Fettle’s Shed Gallery and Railway Station. Page 4

Fri 15<sup>th</sup> May – CanWin Talk - Prof. Bob Douglas 7.30pm WSC Theatre. Page 2

Tue 20<sup>th</sup> May – NPA Talk by Garry Weare ‘Himalaya – reflections and the future’, 7.30pm. Page 2

NPA Bushwalks – April 19, May 23, June 6-8, 20. Page 4

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## February Talk Review

by Denis Wilson

It was very pleasing to see such a good crowd of REPS members, and visitors, to our February meeting.

Geoffrey Dabb, from the Canberra Ornithologist Group, gave a very interesting presentation of some of his high-definition video images of birds. His style of presentation was very pleasant and his photos were excellent. He made considerable use of photomontage in his presentation. So, rather than being a classic presentation of "perfect bird photos", his original adaptation of basic images added greatly to the over-all interest value of his presentation.

The evening concluded with a specially prepared video, in "mocumentary" style, using the natural postures of various waterbirds, and interpreting their postures in a comedic, anthropomorphic manner. It was quite an elaborate ruse, and very funny indeed. A nice way to end the meeting on a light note.

We would like to thank Geoffrey for his presentation, which attracted great interest from the REPS audience.

## Thanks From Jane

I would like to thank members for their kind words about my Australia Day Award. It is a great privilege to be nominated by our community. As no volunteer can do things alone the honour and glory falls to the whole team.

It is a great acknowledgement and very exciting to be recognised nationally.

Thank-you, Jane Lemann

## National Parks Association Talk

"Himalaya – reflections & the future" - Garry Weare  
CWA rooms, Moss Vale, (adjacent to Wingecarribee Shire Council chambers) on Wednesday 20th May 2009, at 7:30pm.

Garry Weare is the executive director of the Australian Himalayan Foundation; the Honorary Secretary for Australia for the Himalayan Club; a fellow of the Royal Geographic Society and Himalayan consultant to the adventure travel company World Expeditions.

Garry Weare will outline some of the remarkable geographic contrasts that make the Himalaya so special before addressing some of the issues and challenges including:

- balancing the aims of the National Parks organisations in India with the needs of the villagers.
- assessing the problems of deforestation and overgrazing.
- exploring the pleasures and pitfalls of eco-tourism that he has witnessed over the past 30 years.

**All welcome. Gold Coin donation.**

## Letter to the Editor

In *The Third Chimpanzee*, environmental guru Jared Diamond wrote:

"We are the only ones creating our problems, so it's completely within our power to solve them."

--Sounds logical, doesn't it? Think again, and recall the final scene in *Thelma and Louise*, where on impulse they decide to drive over the canyon edge. Their impending destruction is a problem *they* started and that *they* could have avoided before

reaching the edge. However, once they crossed the edge and started their downward trajectory, the laws of nature – in this case, gravity – made the problem, even though *they* had created it, unsolvable.

If you're an optimist, you'll believe humans haven't yet reached the edge. If you're a realist, you'll reckon that population increase and the rate of non-renewable resource use means that we're over the edge and have started our downward trajectory.

**Dissident**

## CanWin Talk

Emeritus Professor Bob Douglas AO will present a talk entitled "People responding to the social, environmental and economic challenges of 2009".

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 at 7.30pm in the Wingecarribee Council Theatre, Moss Vale.

\$5.00 non-members, gold coin members.

Bob is the Chair of SEE-Change, an ACT group working to create "healthy people on a healthy planet".

## Cats

by Jane Lemann

Predation by feral cats *Felix catus* is a Key Threatening Process

1. Cats are known to carry *Toxoplasmosis* which affects native animals.

2. There are increasing reports of cat sightings, even in day light, on roadsides and in our reserves.

The Companion Animals Act has been considered an impediment to removal of cats.

### I suggest that:

1. The Council investigate the Companion Animal Act with a view to publicising a requirement that cats are kept contained.
2. That Council publicise that cats are prohibited in public places, parks and reserves.
3. That all feral animal control undertaken by WOFE includes provision for removal of cats
4. That Council rangers or contractors are authorised to remove uncontained cats

There are 18 million feral cats in Australia, 3 million domestic cats and an unknown number of stray cats. The RSPCA reports that one female cat can produce up to 420,000 cats in seven years. Cats will roam up to 30 square kilometres in a night and the each domestic cat kills an average of at least 30 native creatures a year. All cats carry the disease *Toxoplasmosis* to which our native animals have no immunity. Cats are naturally nocturnal carnivores. Predation by Cats is listed by the Australian Government as a Key Threatening Process.

Threat abatement plans are in preparation. Owners of domestic cats should keep them confined. Cats are prohibited from Parks, Reserves and Public Places. The Council impounds wandering cats.

Refs: Australian Government : Assessing invasive animals in Australia 2008 – NLWRA; Threat Abatement Plan for predation by feral cats. 2008 Dept EWHA and background document; Vertebrate Pest Control in Eastern Victoria Under Control July 2008 : Effective techniques for protecting biodiversity from the threat of feral cats in forest environments.

NSW Government Companion Animals Act 1998 No 87

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## Poetry Corner

Edited by Jonathan Persse

We have seen this year in Australia extremes of weather, leading to devastating fires, and floods, and cyclones. Poets in the past have known this, and have written for us all. Here are extracts from three poems and a verse play.

**HENRY KENDALL had seen and heard fires in the mountains:**

*The fierce, disastrous flying fire  
That made the great caves ring.*

**DOROTHEA MACKELLAR  
summed it up in the second stanza of  
“My Country”:**

*I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains;  
I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel-sea,  
Her beauty and her terror—  
The wide brown land for me!*

**CHRISTOPHER BRENNAN starts a  
short poem with these lines:**

*Fire in the heavens, and fire along the hills,  
and fire made solid in the flinty stone,  
thick-mass'd or scatter'd pebble, fire that fills  
the breathless hour that lives in fire alone.*

**DOUGLAS STEWART, in the play “Ned Kelly”, has the Rev. Gribble, Joe Byrne (one of the Kelly Gang), and bank manager Tarleton, talking in the bar of the Royal Hotel, Jerilderie:**

GRIBBLE: *In England even the woods, the fields, and rivers,  
Like the churches the Normans built, ivy and stone,  
Have a sense of grace and order, a long tradition  
Of labour and love and patience against the weather.  
Australia's the violent country, the earth itself  
Suffers, cries out in anger against the sunlight  
From the cracked lips of the plains; and with the land,  
With the snake that strikes from the dust,  
The people suffer and cry their anger and kill.  
I have come to understand it in love and pity;  
Not horror now; I understand the Kellys.*

BYRNE: *I should say you understand the burial service.  
But that's about all*

TARLETON: *There's more than that to it, Gribble.  
You leave a stirrup iron or the barrel of a gun  
In the sun for a while and it burns your hand when you touch it:  
That is the way Australia burns the mind,  
Almost too hot to hold. It's a challenge, man,  
So wild, so vast, so burning, it makes the people  
Stampede to life like cattle rushing to water.  
On to the goldfields! Over the range! Further!  
The bushfires start in the mind as well as the mountains.*



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## Australian Plants Society

Kyril Taylor of the Fern Study Group will give a talk on Native Ferns.

**Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at 7.30pm in the CWA Hall at Moss Vale.**

Light supper. All welcome.

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## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April 10.00am – 4.00pm Vintage Car Day at Robertson Railway

- Kiosk open
- Art exhibition
- Railway and history exhibition.

For further information, 4885-1394 or 4885-2823

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## Next REPS Working Bees Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May & Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May

Meet at the footbridge in Hampden Park (for March working bee) from 9:30am onwards. Don't forget water, hat and gloves. We now have tools available, but if you can, bring your own.

Queries to Steve Douglas 42714957 or Leon Hall 48882222.

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## Welcome to the Southern Highlands Birdwatchers

The Southern Highlands Branch of Bird Observation and Conservation Australia (BOCA) is a newly formed group aimed at everyone with an interest in birds, whether beginner or expert. Col Kohlhagen spoke briefly at our last public meeting on the activities of this group which, as well as organising regular field trips, will have some introductory courses for beginners. One project is to compile a list of the birds you might expect to see in the Southern Highlands.

You can check out the BOCA organisation at [www.birdobservers.org.au](http://www.birdobservers.org.au) or for local activities contact Col Kohlhagen on 4861 3204.

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## Landcare Activities

### Wingecarribee Community Nursery – Seed Processing and Seed Storage Workshop

Sat 28<sup>th</sup> March, 9am until after lunch, free lunch provided – Moss Vale Council Depot, Berrima Road. Professional seed collector, David Warren, will show us the best methods for processing and storing native seed.

**Willow Warriors Paddle & Plant - tree planting day**  
Sat 4<sup>th</sup> April – 9:30 till lunch - Cecil Hoskins Reserve carpark, Moss Vale.

There will be a short paddle on flat water to plant seedlings on the islands within Cecil Hoskins Reserve.

**ChemCert Training** - Full course & Refresher course available with Landcare subsidy. Booked dates: Monday & Tuesday 1st & 2nd of June.

**Contact: Daniel Anderson Community Support Officer, HNCMA, Moss Vale - 4861-9014 or [Daniel.m.anderson@cma.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Daniel.m.anderson@cma.nsw.gov.au)**

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## NPA Walks

### 19 April Sunday Nattai NP

Enjoy ridge walking from High Range to the impressive Russells Needle. Medium day walk. Some walking off track. Keith Williams 48693987 or

[keith.williams@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:keith.williams@environment.nsw.gov.au) Limit: 12

### 23 May Saturday Morton NP

Pipeline Lookout and McPhales Fire Trail. Walk commences about 2km past Fitzroy Visitors Centre. Walk follows an old fire trail. Steep descent through shady forest down into Kangaroo Valley. Medium day walk. Distance: 12km on track – sometimes overgrown - Descent 500m. Joan Lowe 4861 2996 (contact before May 21st) or [joan.lowe@bigpond.com](mailto:joan.lowe@bigpond.com). Car shuffle will be organised.

### 6-8 June Sat-Mon Morton NP

3 day walk through the heart of the Budawangs. Endless opportunities to film, climb and explore as we go deep into the Morton National Park. 3 day pack walk. Medium grade. Mark Goodson 0425 313 173, 4739 3898(5-9pm) or [mgoodson@bigpond.net.au](mailto:mgoodson@bigpond.net.au)

### 20 June Saturday Morton NP

Circuit walk to explore the magnificent old quarries on the side of Mt Gibraltar - the highest point between Sydney and Canberra. Some steep rough sections and slippery rocks. Medium day walk. Distance: 6km on track – sometimes overgrown. Ascent. 150m; descent 150m. Joan Lowe 4861 2996 (contact before June 18th) or [joan.lowe@bigpond.com](mailto:joan.lowe@bigpond.com)

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## Contact REPS

All those who are interested in supporting our aim are welcome to join REPS. Our aim is to promote the preservation and enhancement of the Robertson environment. We welcome contact with individuals and other community groups.

Please contact: The Secretary – Lynn Stevenson  
PO Box 3045, Robertson NSW 2577

President – Leon Hall on 4888 2222

Editors – Monica Engel and Sheila McInnes on 4885 2665 or [monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au](mailto:monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au)