



Newsletter May 2014

COASTWATCHERS MEETING

Saturday 14th June 2pm
Tomakin Community Hall

The speaker is Allan Baxter from a newly formed group, **STOP ARMS FAIR IN EUROBODALLA (SAFE)**. They held a meeting at Dalmeny on 4th May to gather support. Allan has agreed to speak about what they are trying to achieve and gain as much support as they can from the community.

HuntFest 2014 and SAFE

It is important that as well as all the petitions, letters, e-mails and presentations already made to council, we are able to present further substantial proof of the unpopularity of council's dangerous and undemocratic decision to allow a Huntfest/Arms Fair in a public building in the main street of Narooma, every June long weekend for the next 4 years."

SAFE welcomes contact and support via the following details...

email Susan Cruttenden, on behalf of SAFE safenarooma@gmail.com
or write to SAFE PO Box 295 Narooma NSW 2546.

Coastwatchers still seeking help

Unfortunately, our President, Chris Kowal had to stand down due to personal life issues. We are still looking for a **new President**. We meet face to face as a committee only 4 times per year, and communicate a lot via email.

Is there someone who is passionate about protecting Eurobodalla's environment and happy to put up their hand? We'd welcome your enquiry. Contact me at nickhopkins@dodo.com.au or phone 0429 428663.

Also we are looking for a **Media Officer** who could whip up press releases on local issues and be prepared to answer calls from the media and maybe radio interviews. Any takers?

Save Our Marine Life is calling for members of the newly formed Friends of Batemans Marine Park to strengthen the voice of protection of the Park in the face of mixed messages from the State Government. Membership is quick painless and free. Follow this link to sign up:

<http://www.saveourmarinelife.org.au/friends>

Narooma seahorse - photo by Rob Richardson





Marine Litter

Washed up litter along the coastline of Eurobodalla Shire especially

occurring during rough seas is an increasing problem. Fishing related litter including discarded fishing line presents a serious hazard to foraging shorebirds. We can all do our bit by adopting a local beach that we often visit by bringing a rubbish collection bag and removing this often as well unsightly litter. It doesn't take much effort at all to make our local environment a better place.

Exhibition of Broulee Biodiversity Certification Strategy (2014)

Comments due by Friday 30 May 2014

Following consideration of the community's submissions and feedback from the exhibition of the Broulee Biodiversity Certification Strategy (2013), Council resolved at its meeting on 27 August 2013, to amend and re-exhibit the Strategy with additional supporting documents relating to costs, contributions and standards of management.

The Strategy as prepared focuses on urban land in the Broulee village, Moruya Airport and now land at the Moruya Racecourse. The Strategy describes the assessment process undertaken and addresses the statutory 'improve or maintain' standard of the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

The Strategy with further information about offset security, funding sources to support ongoing management, details of the management to be applied to the offset lands and public and private contributions required to fund the proposal are on public exhibition from Wednesday 30 April – Friday 30 May 2014.

Members of the community are invited to make submissions relating to the draft Broulee Biodiversity Certification Strategy 2014 which can be viewed at Councils webpage www.esc.nsw.gov.au, and at the Eurobodalla Council Customer Service Centre, Vulcan Street, Moruya. Comments in writing are welcomed by close of business **Friday 30 May 2014.!!!** Please quote the reference number E06.0470.

If you have any questions, would like further information on this process, or would like to make an appointment to meet with staff during the exhibition period, please contact Shannon Burt on (02) 4474 1000.

Nature Conservation Council Regional Conference 2014

Registrations close at Midday on Wednesday 28th May.

The 2014 NCC Regional Conference, jointly hosted with the South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA) will be held at the **Bermagui Surf Life Saving Club on Saturday 31st May and Sunday 1st June 2014.**

Members, representatives and friends of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC) and SERCA are warmly invited to attend.

Conference Agenda:

The conference starts on **Saturday 31st May** and will run from approximately 9am to 5pm. There is an informal conference dinner on Saturday night.

There will be additional activities and a field trip on the morning of Sunday, 1st June (more details to come).

NCC member groups and representatives are invited to give short updates on their activities during the conference and to display materials, petitions and resources at the venue. Please let us know if you wish to take this opportunity.

Conference Themes:

The important role of the community in achieving positive environmental outcomes is an overarching theme of the conference, with particular emphasis on networking, collaboration and building community capacity.

The conference will explore key conservation challenges and opportunities for the South East and beyond, including:

- forest and wildlife conservation
- marine parks and sanctuaries
- coastal planning and development
- effective campaign strategies
- community organising skills
- creative writing for campaigns.

Venue Information:

Bermagui Surf Life Saving Club
Horseshoe Bay, Dickinson Park (off Lamont St), Bermagui

Registration Information:

Conference registration costs **\$25** for General Admission and should be paid through the online booking system. The ticket price covers the full conference catering except for lunch on the second day (Sunday) and the conference dinner.

To register for the 2014 NCC Regional Conference paste this link into your browser: <http://www.trybooking.com/84045>

Note: Registrations close at Midday on Wednesday 28th May.!!!

Koala Project To Live On Through Management Plan

The Eurobodalla Koalas Project initiated by Coastwatchers several years ago succeeded in raising public and media awareness, collecting local historical knowledge, networking with agencies, searching literature, conducting field surveys, following up community reports of koala presence, modeling habitat and connectivity conditions using GIS computer techniques, and publishing a Eurobodalla Koala Recovery Strategy. The Strategy and the project's other reports are available on the

Coastwatchers website.

Coastwatchers volunteers will spend the rest of 2014 preparing groundwork for a partnership between community groups, Shire Councils and State agencies with a view to developing a Southern Eurobodalla and Northern Bega Valley Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management, set to begin its planning phase in 2015.

Currently NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, Forests Corporation NSW and Eurobodalla Shire Council have expressed interest. Because their resources are limited, an external funding source is required so one of the 2014 tasks will be to look for money, not an easy task in the current environment.

Anyone interested in helping should contact Coastwatchers.

Keith Joliffe & Sophie Hall-Aspland



*Keith and Daniel check the eucalypt species
– The Lagoon, Deua River Valley*

Threatened population of Greater Gliders in Eurobodalla Shire



A population of Greater Gliders in the Bingie and Congo area is listed as threatened. This population is bounded by the Moruya River to the north, Coila lake to the south and the Princes Highway to the west. These barriers greatly restrict dispersal of Greater Gliders and this population is therefore isolated from other occurrences of the species in Moruya State Forest and Deua National Park to the west.

The boundaries of the population encompass an area of just over 6000 ha, half of which supports native vegetation. This vegetation occurs principally in two blocks of 2040 and 1120 ha, which are poorly connected by scattered trees. It is estimated that approximately 1800 ha of the native vegetation in the population area is of a type suitable for occupation by Greater Gliders. Of the total native vegetation in the population area, 25% is in Eurobodalla National Park, the reminders of lands being primarily freehold.

Over the past six months here has been three successful wildlife education evenings organised by staff from Eurobodalla Shire Council in the Bingie and Congo area to raise awareness about this threatened population of Greater Gliders. Eurobodalla Shire Council is also seeking out local residents to gather further information on the whereabouts of Greater Gliders and has professional quality spotlights and binoculars to lend to help people find Greater Gliders and distinguish them from other possum species. If you would like to be involved please contact Eurobodalla Shire Council on 4474 1000



The trouble with some children's books

Dierk von Behrens

As an inveterate bibliophile (book lover) and ingrained field naturalist I regularly buy books on natural history, mostly pre-loved ones going cheap!

The most recent was Barbara Taylor's 64 page ***Snakes***, from the Nature Fact File Series, Southwater imprint of Ames Publishing, 2000: ISBN 1-84215-018-9. Appealing, beautifully illustrated, well structured, with glossary and index, I nevertheless find it difficult to recommend this booklet for children - at whom it is aimed (8-to-12-year-olds). Why?

The work abounds with *teleological* language:

'Snakes have forked tongues *for* smelling and tasting the air.'(pg. 4)

'Snakes also have different shapes *to* suit their different environments. Sea snakes have flat bodies and tails like oars *to* help them push against the water and move forwards...' (pg. 6) (*My italics*)

'Teleological' derives from Greek *telos*, "end" and *logos*, "science". According to Wikipedia, a **teleology** is any philosophical account that holds that final causes exist in nature, meaning that, analogous to purposes found in human actions, nature inherently tends toward definite ends. Since the *Novum Organum Scientiarum* of Francis Bacon of 1620 teleological explanations in science tend to be deliberately avoided, because whether they are true or false is argued to be beyond the ability of human perception and understanding to judge. Some disciplines, in particular within evolutionary biology, are still prone to use language that appears teleological when they describe natural tendencies towards certain end conditions, but these arguments can almost always be rephrased in non-teleological forms. such as, in this instance:

'Snakes have forked tongues which they use to smell and taste the air.'(pg. 4)

'Snakes also have different shapes, each enabling that particular snake to best survive in its specific environment. Sea snakes have flat bodies and tails like oars. Their tails help them push against the water and move forwards...'

Ever since publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859 we are aware of the mechanism of evolution: natural selection working upon inherited variations that lead to better adaptations of whole populations to specific environments. There is no reason why even children of 8 to 12 years cannot grasp this concept if it is carefully explained.

According to the Free Dictionary teleology is:

1. The study of design or purpose in natural phenomena.
2. The use of ultimate purpose or design as a means of explaining phenomena.

3. Belief in or the perception of purposeful development toward an end, as in nature or history.

If the language used in children's nature books is that of intention, design or purpose, i.e. is teleological, then this must suggest to the child that there is such intentionality, purpose or design in nature (or history) and strongly implies an intender, purpose-giver, or designer – usually called 'God'.

There is time enough later in life for our children, once they understand post-Darwinian biology and it becomes part of their conceptual framework, to critically examine these three possible teleologies. What I am seeking to do here is to warn parents against their children unwittingly absorbing unjustified and superseded teleological thinking through sloppily expressed children's books.

How to help the Pied Oystercatchers

Pied Oystercatchers nest directly on the beach, foredune or in the dunes. Unfortunately they nest during spring and summer when the beaches are busiest. Their simple nest-scrapes in the sand and well camouflaged eggs are very hard to see, and therefore at great risk of being stepped on. Pied Oystercatcher chicks are just as vulnerable – they are tiny, camouflaged and cannot fly until they are at least 5 weeks old.



There are some simple changes you can make to be a more aware and more conscientious visitor to the beach during Pied Oystercatcher breeding season. Learn to identify what Pied Oystercatchers look like. If they are present on the beach during spring and summer then it is likely they are nesting there. Read the signs around you. These often inform you of endangered shore birds that are in the vicinity and of the local beach rules. Please obey these rules. If you see a fenced off area, please keep out. The fence is there to protect fragile shorebird nesting sites.