



# Eucryphia

ISSN 1037 – 2032

Number 123 – February 2013

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)

## REPS Meeting Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm Robertson Community Centre Caalong Street, Robertson



### PUBLIC ADDRESS BY EMINENT ENVIRONMENT LAWYER

**Dr Martijn Wilder**  
(Dr Wilder of Wildes Meadow, Southern Highlands, has a distinguished background in academia, economics, investment and international law.)

### “Demystifying Australia’s Response to Climate Change. Why is it important? Sorting out fact from Fiction.”

What has the Federal Government done with respect to its policies, rules and programs on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change? We all hear about the carbon tax and emissions trading, what the government is doing and what Mr Abbott will do, but it is all very confusing to someone who does not understand it or just relies on the headlines.

This talk will demystify this somewhat:

- outline what the Australian Government is doing
- what other Governments are doing
- what will happen if there is a change of government in Australia
- and what the current bushfires mean.

Graduating with first class honours in economics from the University of Sydney, Dr Wilder went on to take a law degree from the Australian National University, a Commonwealth Trust Fellowship to Cambridge and to The Hague University where he developed an interest in environmental law. Now Head of the Baker & McKenzie Global Markets Group, he is also Adjunct Professor in Climate Change at the ANU. Last year he was awarded the Order of Australia for service in environmental law and climate change. According to Paul Keating, Martijn played the key role in thwarting international mining in Antarctica, the “common heritage of mankind”.

His current appointments include: Cambridge University Affiliate for climate Change Mitigation Research, Chair, NSW Government Climate Change Council, Director, Federal Government Program “Low Carbon Australia”, Director\Clean Energy Finance Corporation (with \$10B funding).

**All welcome - \$2 donation**

**Light supper towards which members  
may like to add**

## Upcoming Events

**Fri 8<sup>th</sup> February** – REPS Public Meeting, Speaker, Dr Martijn Wilder, 7:30pm, Community Centre

**Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb & 30<sup>th</sup> Mar** – Caalang Creek Working Bees from 9.30 onwards, see pg 6

**NPA Walks** – Southern Highlands Branch, February and March, see pp 3&4

**Fri 15<sup>th</sup> Mar** – Screening of documentary film “A Place Called Robertson” at the Empire Theatre. See the website <http://fourdonkeyfilms.com/news/> for further information

---

---

## President's Report

The Robertson Environment Protection Society is beginning 2013 with an expanded committee of enthusiastic new members, and we look forward to an interesting program of speakers and activities. Many new members joined our society at the 80th anniversary railway fair, including our February speaker, Martijn Wilder, who, with a lifetime of work in the environmental movement at international level, is a valuable addition to our membership.

One of the duties that REPS set itself early on is the care of our village's unique rain forest nature reserve. This small piece of land still has on it a plant community that has been preserved from before European settlement, to show future generations what Robertson was like thousands of years ago.

It is only a short (15-20 minutes) walk around a well made path, with signage provided by National Parks on significant and typical plants. Although there are a few patches of remnant rainforest still extant around Robertson, most are on private land and many have been degraded by stock, feral animals and weeds, losing the fragile fern ground covers. REPS members have provided care for the reserve to ensure this doesn't happen there, by carefully weeding out feral plant incursions.

This is probably the most important REPS project we have, led by Helen Tranter, with a few volunteers, who devote Wednesday mornings weeding every month and generally ensuring the health of the reserve.

Now Helen would like some younger champion/s to understudy her with a view to taking over the reins one day. If you feel you would like to contribute to your village and its environment in a very effective way, we would like to hear from you. Helen has an extensive knowledge of Australian plants and here is an opportunity to learn from an expert. The work is performed under the guidance and help of the National Parks, who provide the heavy work when required. If you are a person who prefers doing something active and very worthwhile, here is a project where you can contribute effectively.

Thanks to Peter and Lyn Glass for holding the REPS Christmas Party at their home. For once the planned date did not clash with my granddaughter's ballet concert, so I could attend, and Judith and I were very glad we did. It was a great pleasure to arrive in daylight to see how beautiful Peter and Lyn have made their garden, and then take part in conversation and food while the evening drew in. Retiring to Peter's garage, nicely cleaned up for the occasion, we listened to Bob McInnes play Christmas Carols on his violin, with the more adventurous singing along. What a wonderful evening.

A Happy New Year to all members.  
David Mee

---

---

## AGM and November Talk Report

by David Mee

The November meeting began with President Allan Stiles welcoming everyone who attended. Allan made a special presentation to former President Leon Hall, awarding Honorary Life Membership, for dedication and services over many years as President of the Society. The Annual General Meeting opened. With the official reports being tabled and all committee positions declared vacant. Judith Mee, as returning officer, conducted the election for the new committee (see p6 for the list).

Allan Stiles, who wished not to continue in the role of President, still remains on the committee as a member and his advice and participation will ensure continuity of the committee into 2013. Thank you Allan for all that you have done in your tenure as President.

With the election completed, Judith retired as returning officer and the AGM closed. The new President, yours truly, David Mee, took the floor to continue the November meeting. Allan was recalled to the floor to introduce his good friend and speaker for the evening Denis Wilson. Many Robertson residents will know Denis from his blog [www.peonyden.blogspot.com](http://www.peonyden.blogspot.com), where he is revealed as a keen observer of nature and life in our village, a fantastic photographer and general raconteur.

### “A Short Illustrated Talk about the Local Environment”

One of Denis's many interests is the rich variety of orchids found around Robertson and district, mainly on the surrounding sandstone country, but not exclusively there. His talk was on this topic, illustrated by his photographs. In the audience to support Denis was his friend Alan Stephenson, from Nowra, who authored the book “Orchid Species of the Shoalhaven”.

Denis began with what most of the audience regard as typical orchids, the epiphytes. There are not so many of these, but Denis mentioned one of the *Sarcochilus* genus, its common name the Orange Blossom Orchid. Also the tangle orchid and the dagger orchid, named for the shape of its leaves.

Far more plentiful in species are the terrestrial orchids. To see these, Denis's favourite spots are the sandstone-derived soils of Kangaloon, on the Tourist road and Kirkland Road verges. Most are known only by their formal botanical name, but others have common names as well, including the Flying Duck Orchid, for example. Denis noted that each orchid often has its own special way of being pollinated. In his talk, Denis listed many types, some of which I recorded as he spoke. If I have left any out, or misspelt any names, the fault is entirely mine for not keeping up.

There was the Cooper Bearded Orchid, *Calochilus campestris*, the Red Bearded Orchid, *Calochilus paludosus*, and the Purple Bearded Orchid, *Calochilus platytilus*. Then the Tongue Orchid, *Cryptostylus*

---

---

*leptachila*, which can grow to 60cm or more. *Diplodium obtusum*, the autumn flowering Greenhood was shown. At Penrose, Denis observed the Donkey Orchid, *Diuris punctata* and also the Tiger Orchid, *Diuris sulphurea*. *Eriochilus cucullatis*, the Parsons Bands Orchid was illustrated as were the Hyacinth Orchids, *Dipodium roseum*, *D.variegatum* and *D.punctatum*, found near Kirkland Road. The Hyacinth orchids have no leaves, being parasitic on gum trees and symbiotic with a fungus which provides nutrient (sounds difficult to grow in the home garden, if not impossible). Denis mentioned *Microtis unfolia* and *Microtis rara*, two small orchids. The Horned Orchid *Orthocerus strictum* was illustrated. *Prasophyllum flavum*, the tall Yellow Leek Orchid was observed at Tourist Road and also at Penrose. It has an upside down flower.

Tiny Greenhoods, *Speculantha parviflora*, and Ladies Tresses Orchid *Spiranthes australis* were presented, the latter having a spiral of pink flowers around the stem. The Sun Orchids, *Thelymitra* genus, were also illustrated, with the species being *T. ixioides*, the Spotted Sun Orchid, blue flowers, *T. juncifolius*, the Rush Leafed Sun Orchid, *T. carnea*, with pink flowers, *T. x irregularis*, a natural hybrid and the endangered local *T. kangaloonica*, growing at Butler's Swamp.

The talk was brought to life by Denis's photography and commentary. His website has illustrations of most of the above and more. I have always thought that the difference between a "native garden" and true natural bushland is the terrestrial orchids.

Denis completed his talk with some wonderful photographs to illustrate other aspects of the Robertson environment. These included a Damsel Fly, a yellow and black Jewel Beetle and a red and black Lichen Moth. He also had a photo of an Echidna, and discussed creatures vulnerable to fire such as the Ground Parrot and the Eastern Bristlebird.

Thanks, gifts, applause and questions followed, not necessarily in that order, and then a welcome cup of tea with cakes, organised by Jane Maxwell. Thanks very much Jane.

## Leon Hall, Life Membership

by Helen Tranter

At the AGM last November Leon Hall was given a well deserved Life Membership of REPS. Leon joined the Society at the first meeting in November 1990 and was active from the start in tree planting, the Streamwatch project and Landcare work around Caalang Creek in Hampden Park.

Leon joined the REPS Committee, was Secretary in 2000, Vice President in 2002, 2003 and President from 2004 until the end of 2009. It was during Leon's time as President, in August 2005, that REPS won the NSW Landcare Gold Award in the category of "Bushcare Nature Conservation" which was presented to him in Wagga Wagga. This meant REPS was an entrant in the

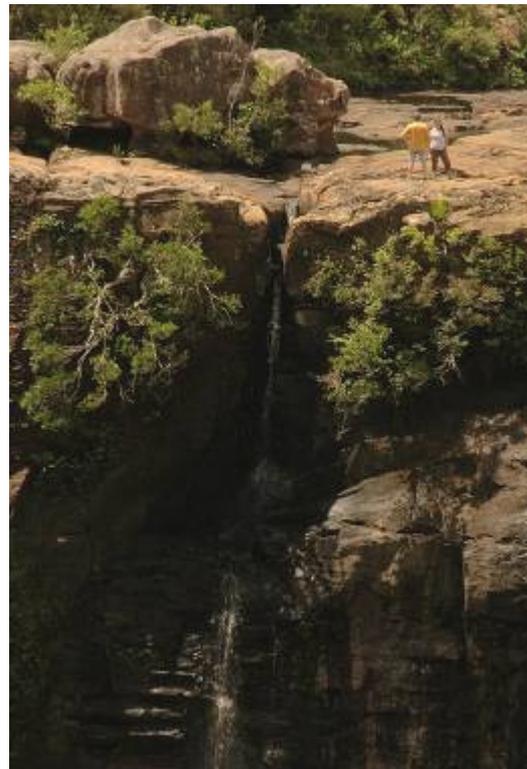
2006 National Landcare Awards in Melbourne where we achieved second place.

Leon served on Upper Nepean Catchment committees and obtained a grant for an Upper Nepean Planting Project. Towards the end of 2005 the Sydney Catchment Authority was beginning to drill bores on their land along Tourist Road and elsewhere. Leon's catchment interest and experience enabled him to be appointed to the "Shoalhaven Water Transfer Community Reference Group" and then to the "Upper Nepean Groundwater Community Reference Group" in 2006 and provided valuable REPS input to these two causes. This involved Leon studying many lengthy documents, attending all the meetings and then preparing the detailed submissions against the borefield proposal and in support of the endangered local flora and fauna. This was a long battle lasting until the borefield proposal was shelved at the end of 2008. Leon continues to be one of the main workers at the monthly working bees on the Caalang Creek riparian restoration project.

## Carrington Falls - nearly bone dry.

by Denis Wilson

If you ever want to see Carrington Falls, when it is "memorable" go now. (Ed's Note: Denis wrote this article mid-January so you may be too late, it is raining steadily as I type).



There is so little flow in the Upper Kangaroo River at present that I estimate the flow is about as little as one could pour with a large bucket. The entire flow of the River trickles through two low points in the Rock Bar, which is otherwise totally dry. These two trickles are each less than a hand-span wide.

---

---

By contrast, see the image from 1 March 2012.

That is far from a record high flow. The bridge over the Kangaroo River has been known to "go under" apparently - I have never seen it that high.

Remember this river has a very small catchment (above the Falls). It rises on Knights Hill and the sandstone heath country on the low side of Jamberoo Mountain Road. There is simply no flow from the heath country. What flow there is comes from the western side of the Basalt Cap of Knights Hill. Nellies Glen, which comes from the northern side of the local plateau, over towards Lees Road, has no flow at all.

To me this nearly dry river flow is a real sign of how dry the local bush is. I need not spell out the corresponding fire danger.

As I write this, the weather bureau is predicting rain to wash down the NSW coast, as far as the Illawarra – as a result of ex-Cyclone Oswald. It remains to be seen if it comes this far. The bush needs a good drenching.



March 1, 2012

Text & photos by Denis Wilson

<http://www.peonyden.blogspot.com.au/>

## NPA Walks

### 2 Feb Sat Bundanoon - Morton National Park

Grade: 3; Distance: 10 km; asc/desc 235m.

**Description:** Visit Amphitheatre, Fairy Bower Falls. Lots of steps and slippery in parts.

Leader: **Elizabeth Ray** Branch: **Illawarra**

### 3 Feb Sun - Illawarra Escarpment

Grade: 3; Distance: 9 km; asc/desc 100m.

**Description:** Mt Ousley to Bulli Tops. Car shuffle then fairly level walk along escarpment. Great views.

Leader: **Helen Wilson** Branch: **Illawarra**

### 9 Feb Sat - Morton National Park

Grade: 3; Distance: 11 km; asc/desc 150m.

**Description:** Beehive Point on Lake Yarrunga from Jack's Corner. From the car park follow Griffins Fire Trail a short distance to a left branch track.

Follow this track which winds through forest until descending to a fire trail. Turn right and continue the descent to the lake and a lovely lunch spot at Beehive Point. Return via the fire trail. Rough Track, Steep Sections.

Leader: **Joan Lowe** Branch: **Southern Highlands**  
Limit: 12

Map: Bundanoon 8928-I-S

### 24 Feb Sun - Illawarra Coast

Grade: 1; Distance: 7 - 8 km; asc/desc 50m.

**Description:** Leisurely walk from Towradgi along beaches and dunes to Bellambi Lagoon and return.

Leader: **Pam Robinson** Branch: **Illawarra**

### 3 Mar Sun - Tahmoor Canyon Bargo River

Grade: 3-4; Distance: 10 km; asc/desc 150m.

**Description:** Tahmoor Canyon is on the Bargo River. The walk is along the Bargo River on the Mermaid Pool Track and then the Matilda Track giving lovely views of the river. Continuing on to Sugarloaf Pass the track descends steeply down to the river. Following the river requires some scrambling and rock hopping with a couple of river crossings to reach Jacks Pass ascending steeply to rejoin the Matilda Track. Return via this track. Rough Track, Steep Sections, Creek Crossings, Rock Scrambling.

Leader: **Joan Lowe** Branch: **Southern Highlands**  
Limit: 12

Map: Picton 9029-4S

### 29 Mar Fri - Best of the Illawarra Escarpment

Grade: 3; Distance: 14 km; asc/desc 150m.

**Description:** Maddens Plains tracks. Stanwell Park to Sublime Pt lookout. Interesting walk with varied vegetation and great coastal views. Section of the "Grand Escarpment walk- Illawarra" and part of "Great Eastern Ranges i2s project". Opportunity to camp for the long weekend in the Illawarra, contact leader for details.

Leader: **Graham Burgess** Branch: **Illawarra**  
Limit: 15

---

---

## Poetry Corner

Edited by Jonathan Persse

## Birds and Us

BIRDS, Stanzas 1 and 2

Judith Wright

Whatever the bird is, is perfect in the bird.  
Weapon kestrel hard as a blade's curve,  
thrush round as a mother or a full drop of water,  
fruit-green parrot wise in his shrieking swerve—  
all are what bird is and do not reach beyond bird.

Whatever the bird does is right for the bird to do—  
cruel kestrel dividing in his hunger the sky,  
thrush in the trembling dew beginning to sing,  
parrot clinging and quarrelling and veiling his queer eye—  
all these are as birds are and good for birds to do.

### A FLOCK OF GANG-GANGS.

Stanzas 3,5,6 and 9 Douglas Stewart

There is the sound of granite in their voices,  
Of rocks in ice, high up and harsh and wintry,  
And yet in their soft plumes summer rejoices  
In flame and charcoal, so they fit the country.

Some sharpen their great beaks on hard dead wood  
And nip the twigs off in a leafy rain,  
Some spread their wings and flare in fighting mood  
That's all pretence, then fall to sleep again.

Some preen each other, some to show their skill  
Hang upside down like bats from the high branches  
While drowsy lovers nibble bill to bill  
With horny kisses and with sidelong glances.

So when one soft grey feather flutters down  
I pick it up before cold time can take it  
Or lose it where the fallen leaves lie brown,  
And put it, with this poem, in my pocket.

### STORM-BIRD

Clover F.Nolan, Winton

Have you heard a Storm-bird shrieking in the channels,  
When the river bed is cracked and powder-dry,  
And the coolabah trees sadly droop, and wither,  
As the sheep and cattle round them quietly die?

Have you heard a Storm-bird calling from the river,  
Its rasping cry, or from the stockyard gate,  
And watched the rain clouds roll, and slowly gather,  
And prayed they'd burst before it was too late?

Oh, a Storm-bird's grating song is stirring music,  
As it screams, and hurtles by on rapid wings;  
For this bird is the bringer of wet seasons,  
An omen, to which every bush man clings.

From INSIGHT: WINGS ABOVE WINGS

R.D.FitzGerald

Study the lyrebird's nest,  
the wren drinking;  
but who puts to test  
that hung eagle: thinking?

Yet all that cell-stuff draws  
within skull's limits  
is prey to the swoop and claws  
from mind's cold summits.

For thought, wings above wings,  
is time's life waking  
out of its dead springs—  
this moment in making.

### THE CURLEW

Rhona Maxwell, Winton

'Tis in the dark you venture out  
O, shy bird of this land,  
And rarely are you seen by day  
Or touched by human hand.  
When twilight falls upon the bush,  
Or the moon sails up on high,  
You keep in shadows grey, and call  
Your lament unto the sky.  
You tell of grief in years long gone,  
Of grief that's yet to be,  
Your lonely cry is tossed on high,  
Fascinatingly.  
You call to shadows as they pass,  
And you and they are one.  
You go then, grey bird of the bush,  
To flee the morning sun. —

Please send a poem – why not one of your own? – to Jonathan Persse, Sallyhill, Burrawang 2577



## Caalang Creek Working Bees

Caalang Creek Working Bees are usually held on the last Saturday of each month from 9:30am onwards subject to the weather. Please come and join us for as long as you are able.

### The next Working Bees will be on the 23rd February and the 30th March

Meet at the footbridge in Hampden Park. Don't forget water, hat and gloves. We now have tools available, but bring your own if you can.

Queries to Steve Douglas 4271 4957 or Leon Hall 4888 2222.

## Help Care for Our Nature Reserve

**1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month**

**9:30am to noon**

Starting again on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

Everyone welcome; please bring garden gloves; work sites are chosen according to the weather; stay only as long as you choose.

Details: Helen Tranter 4885 1394 or Ford Kristo (NPWS) business hours 4887 8244.

## Reminder REPS Membership

**Renewals: Your support for REPS is very much appreciated. Have you overlooked the renewal of your REPS membership for 2013?**

If you have received a REPS membership renewal form with this *Eucryphia*, our records show that your REPS membership fees are now overdue. Please refer to the form enclosed for information about the ways in which you can renew.

## Young Citizen of the Year

REPS committee member Erica Longhurst received this award at the shire Australia Day celebrations

Erica was nominated for her contribution to her school and her peers, her selfless generosity, capacity for compassion and strong volunteer work ethic. In addition for her continuously striving for academic excellence, Erica is an advocate for social justice and consistently looks out for her fellow students. Erica can often be found volunteering her time at numerous regional organisations including St John Ambulance, Burrawang Rural Fire Brigade, Robertson Environment Protection Society, Berrima District Museum, to name but a few. Quietly spoken, strong of conviction and dedicated to community service, Erica's selfless

contributions have made a genuine difference to our Shire.

## REPS Meetings for 2013

The dates for this year's public meetings are as listed below. Each meeting will include a talk that will be publicised in the *Eucryphia* prior to the meeting.

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August

October 5<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> – Saturday Walk - to be confirmed

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November (Annual General Meeting)

## REPS Committee List 2013

President – David Mee

Vice President – Karen Guymer

Secretary – Georgina Perse

Treasurer – Anne Wilson

Committee Members – Monica Engel, Peter Glass, Leon Hall, Erica Longhurst, Susannah Newton, Allan Stiles, David Tranter, Helen Tranter, Kate van Eimeren.

*Eucryphia* Editors – Monica Engel, Sheila McInnes

Supper Convenor – Jane Maxwell

Talks Convenor – Karen Guymer

REPS Public Officer is Helen Tranter

Caalang Creek Project Group - Steve Douglas

## 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. For further information and subscriptions please contact: The Secretary – Georgina Perse

PO Box 3045,

Robertson NSW 2577

or President – David Mee on 4885 1483

We are always looking for new contributions to *Eucryphia*. If you have an essay, article, poem or photograph that you would like to share with other REPS members please contact Monica Engel or Sheila McInnes

email: [monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au](mailto:monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au)

All contributions will be most welcome.

**Visit the REPS website**

[www.reps.org.au](http://www.reps.org.au)