



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

PUBLIC MEETING

Friday, 10th August 2018, 7.30pm
Robertson Community Centre

Speaker: Michael Meldrum

LOW CARBON LIVING SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Low Carbon Living is a new program for regions wanting to become low carbon locations. Initiated by the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute (BMWHI) and Australia's Cooperative Research Centre for Low Carbon Living (CRC-LCL), the program encourages local businesses and communities to reduce their overall carbon footprint and do their bit to combat climate change.

The businesses involved in this program are audited and given advice on how to reduce their carbon usage and thereby save running costs. They also receive a gold, silver or bronze rating based on their achievements. Through access to a new website, residents and visitors can find details of their local businesses carbon reductions and ratings. It's a great way to make smarter and more informed choices of where to shop and which services to use. In this way the Low Carbon Living program allows you to reduce your own carbon footprint by supporting local businesses that are reducing theirs.

Low Carbon Living Southern Highlands offers participation and accreditation for businesses and community groups with facilities that reduce their carbon footprint by joining the Sustainability Cost Reduction In Business (SCRIB) program. Previous regional NSW research has found that 91% of residents and 82% of visitors would choose a local business that

made an effort to reduce their carbon footprint over a business that did not. Based on all of the research we have seen and case studies we have conducted, we are confident that the SCRIB Program will achieve cost savings in the areas of energy, waste and water.



ALL WELCOME

Join us for supper and a chat after the talk.
A gold coin donation would be appreciated.

SNAKES IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Report of talk at REPS public meeting, 8 June 2018

The very knowledgeable and enthusiastic Ray McGibbon (Licensed Snake Catcher – Oz Style Reptiles) gave his second, updated talk at the bi-monthly public presentation organised by REPS. There was a lot of new, promising, and exciting news about snakes in Australia, particularly in the Southern Highlands, which fascinated the audience. Many questions were asked and Ray's presentation employed excellent photographs, some showing his amazing skill in handling these creatures that terrify most of us.

We were informed that venom is a mixture of different toxins and that Australian snakes are among the most dangerous in the world.

Venomous snakes found in the Southern Highlands, rated in the Australian top 20, are:

- # 2 – Eastern Brown (interestingly, the **only** snake that changes its venom as it matures to suit its change of prey)
- # 6 – Eastern or Mainland Tiger Snake
- # 9 – Common Death Adder
- #15 – Red-bellied Black Snake
- #18 – Small-eyed Snake

Ray's catchcry is: **'The most dangerous snake in Australia is the one you don't leave alone!'**

From the late 1800s to 2018 it was reported that there have been 58 deaths (20 since 2010) from snake bites in Australia – seemingly a low number considering our abundant, highly venomous snakes.

What do you do if you see a snake?

- Stand still, **DO NOT** move. Absolutely **DO NOT** make any large movements as a snake sees these as a threat.
- After standing still for some time and demonstrating you are not a threat, move slowly **backwards**, one step at a time.
- When the snake feels secure and confident enough to turn away, continue your slow backwards retreat.
- When the snake moves away from you you too can turn around and retreat more quickly.
- Glance back to stay within eyesight if possible.
- Call your local snake catcher for removal.

We were told about exciting research into polygenic anti-venins (broad spectrum). They will be lifesavers, especially if the snake has not been identified.

Ray corresponds with a London veterinary student undertaking a research project on rare reptile diseases. He sends any findings he has on Southern Highlands' copperheads with signs of the disease in the pursuit of gaining more knowledge about this and how it can be countered. Research has revealed a rare spinal disease in sixteen Australian venomous reptiles. Progressive spinal osteoarthropathy has been discovered in the Southern Highlands' copperhead. This disease can be genetic or develop from the lack of certain

nutrients in the snake's food. It causes marbled-sized growths along the spinal column.



Copperhead with spinal osteoarthropathy



Normal Copperhead

Ray is the only licensed snake catcher in the Southern Highlands. He also collects funnel web spiders and sends them to be milked for their venom so antivenin can be made.

To see Ray in action, see his videos on YouTube, Ozstylereptiles: local rescues, tar removal etc. or Facebook: ozstylereptiles.

For more specific information, email: info@ozstylereptiles.com.au or call 0400 734 225

Lyndy Scott, Secretary REPS

POETRY CORNER edited by Peter Glass

Louisa Lawson was an Australian poet, writer, publisher, suffragist, and feminist.
She was the mother of the poet and author Henry Lawson

The Winter Wind

by Louisa Lawson (1848 – 1920)

The winter wind! e wh-e-e, e wh-e-e!
It bites and smites and chases me,
And pelts with boughs and shrieks with
glee,
This winter wind so fierce and free;
Till wide-eyed stars so white and wee
Peer through the scud all fearsomely.

The love-warm rose no longer now
Clings fondly round fair nature`s brow;
But in its place the chill winds roam
Through locks as white as frozen foam.
The winter wind so fierce and free
Has wrought this change. Ah me! Ah me!

Her dress that once was green and bright
Is stiffened sheer and bleached to white,
And where did rose and lily be
Are flecks of frosty filagree.
His breath is death, his voice is dree,
This winter wind so fierce and free.



The word dree as in the last verse is Scottish and means to endure [something burdensome or painful]

Louisa Albury was born near Gulgong NSW in February 1848. She married Neils Lawson (previously Larson) in 1866, but later left him taking their four children (including Henry, born 1867) to Sydney in 1883.

The welfare of women and their rights became Louisa's passion. Her determination to raise awareness of women's issues to the general public resulted in her founding and publishing a magazine titled 'Dawn' in 1888. The continued publication of 'Dawn' was instrumental in moving public opinion towards enfranchising women in 1902.

Louisa was the first to publish her son Henry's work. Henry Lawson's outback stories and poetry often portrayed women as kind - yet strong, hard-working and resourceful. Perhaps his mother Louisa's strength was an inspiration for Henry's powerful women characters.

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawson-louisa-7121>

<http://www.warrenfahey.com.au/rookwood-cemeterys-notable-residents/>

We would very much welcome your contribution. Send to Peter Glass, 65 Vandenberg Road, Robertson 2577. Tel: 4885 1921

FURTHER REPS MEETINGS 2018

Friday 10th August
Low Carbon Living SH

Friday 12th October

Friday 9th November
AGM and presentation

Friday 14th December
Christmas Party

CAALANG CREEK WORKING BEES

The last Saturday of every month at 9:30am onwards, subject to the weather.

Next working bee: Saturday 25th August

Please come and join us for as long as you are able. Don't forget water, hat and gloves. We have tools available, but bring your own if you can. Caalang Creek volunteers meet at the footbridge in Hampden Park. 9:30 am.

Steve Douglas 4271 4957 or Leon Hall 4888 2222

GET SMART with YOUR SMART PHONE

Learning more about our threatened species can be as easy as reaching for your phone. Customised apps allow academics or citizen scientists – in fact anyone in the community with a smart phone – to find, study and record precious plants and animals and their habitats.

One of the highly accessible apps is **Hollows as Homes**. This project works with the community and land managers to assess tree hollow availability, as hollows are an important but limited resource for wildlife in Australia, particularly in urban and agricultural areas. When a tree hollow is spotted, citizen scientists may record the location of the tree, tree species, size of hollow and if any wildlife is living in it.



This online web based portal was designed by John Martin from OEH's cluster partner Royal Botanic Gardens. SoS's Scientist Geetha Ortac and her team of citizen scientists from Park Hyatt Sydney spent a morning at Bradleys Head in Sydney Harbour National Park in April learning and looking for hollows, contributing to this wonderful initiative.

HELP CARE FOR OUR NATURE RESERVE

1st Wednesday of each month from 9:30am -noon.
Meet at the South Street Carpark. Please bring garden gloves. More volunteers would be greatly appreciated. Everyone is welcome. It is not necessary to stay for the full time.
Details: NPWS in business hours: 4887 8253.

REPS MEMBERSHIP

Membership is from November to November. We are having a great year in 2018. If you are not yet a member, please consider becoming one.
Helen Tranter phone 4885 1394

CONTACT REPS

Those who are interested in supporting our aims 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. Further info and subscriptions please contact:

President – Peter Glass on 4885 1921,
Vice-President – David Mee on 4885 1483
or PO Box 3045, Robertson 2577

Articles for *Eucryphia* may be sent to the editors:
Allan Stiles and Lynn Stevenson.

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VISIT THE REPS WEBSITE

www.reps.org.au