

The Bowen Mountain Association Inc.

# NEWSLETTER

Issue No 147, 148 **Summer** December 2021



## **In This Issue**

## **Our State Floral Emblem**

**Summer Migratory Birds in our Area**

**Christmas in the Park - 18<sup>th</sup> December**

The Bowen Mountain Newsletter is a quarterly publication compiled by a sub-committee of the Bowen Mountain Association Inc. and delivered free to residents of Bowen Mountain and to Grose Vale Post Office.

For verification purposes, articles submitted for publication are to include the author's name, address or phone number. Unacknowledged articles will not be published.

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**DEADLINE for March Issue**  
**1 February 2022**

**COVER**  
**Waratah**  
Frank Allat

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## Editor's Letter

Greetings to all our readers and welcome to the Summer issue.

Our thanks to Frank Allat from Berambing for our cover photo.

In this issue, is an article on our State Emblem, the Waratah, also we include an article from Eric Finley on our summer migratory birds, important information in the Fire Report, and an invite to the forthcoming Christmas in the Park.

2021 has been an unusual year for us all, but we look forward to a brighter 2022 and your contributions. This Newsletter is published four times a year to coincide with the seasons ie March, June, September and December.

If would prefer to receive a hard copy, please let the BMA Secretary know and one will be delivered to you, otherwise the newsletter will continue to be available via a link on the Bowen Mountain Facebook page.



Wishing you all a very happy and safe Christmas.

*BMA Newsletter Committee*

### Newsletter Editorial Committee

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Newsletter –

Community Care – Liz Rowan

Webmaster – Chris Duckworth

Facebook Administrator

**BMA Committee meetings are held in the Park Community Room on the second Monday of each month at 7.30pm**

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## PRESIDENT and SECRETARY'S REPORT JUNE – DECEMBER 2021

We hope everyone is enjoying the new “freedoms” we have been afforded with the end of lockdown and that everyone has been safe and healthy during this time. As a result of the recent COVID 19 lockdown, the BMA was also in lockdown and we had to postpone publication and distribution of the Bowen Mountain Association Newsletter. However, to end yet another challenging year on a positive note we have decided to publish the Summer edition of the newsletter in early December 2021 and quarterly thereafter.

During the lockdown period, the BMA remained active and achieved many goals. BMA meetings were conducted as scheduled throughout the year via email. BMA achievements during this year included:

1) Defibrillator in the Park Update - The defibrillator in the park was found to be non-functional in April 2021. It needed a new battery and pads as well as servicing. The BMA applied to Bendigo Bank for funding for new parts for the Park defibrillator. Our application was approved and funds were deposited into our account. Restart the Heart supplied us with a new battery and adult pad funded by Bendigo Bank. However, after replacement of these parts the unit was still showing Service Required and it was determined that the unit needed to be returned for servicing and was still under warranty. Colin Chesterman arranged for Zoll Medical Australia to send a loan unit while our unit was sent to the USA for repair. We have now received our repaired Defibrillator from the USA, which is currently operational in the Park.

2) We received an email from Inspector Stone, Hawkesbury Police to say that

Hawkesbury Police Area Command (PAC), are continually focussed on enhancing their community engagement activities. They have assigned various areas within the Command to different members of the Senior Management teams. We have been fortunate to have Inspector Stone assigned to Bowen Mountain as a point of contact for the Bowen Mountain Community. Inspector Stone will be happy to participate in community activities and events that may be organised and assist if we have any general questions with Policing in our area.

We extend a warm welcome to Inspector Stone who will be invited to attend one of the monthly Bowen Mountain Association Management meetings to discuss how local police can assist the Bowen Mountain Community.

3) The BMA Community Care committee organised by Liz Rowan and Martha Allen purchased 20 community care packages and delivered these to Community Care residents during the lockdown. Shopping was undertaken for some people and

phone calls were made to check on people's wellbeing.

4) As advised by NSW Fair Trading in regard to Annual General Meetings under COVID-19 restrictions, the BMA will postpone its 2021AGM until 2022.

5) A concerned bushwalker recently commented:

*“We have walked the Bowen Mountain trails almost on a weekly basis since we retired to family and the Hawkesbury some 20 years ago. Recently we noticed that the Jamieson Trail now sports a National Parks sign, just west of the Bunning/Jamieson junction, designating it the Bunning Fire Trail”.*

Upon enquiry we find that this is not a mistake, and that National Parks have now renamed the Jamieson Fire Trail the Bunning Fire Trail, and will probably close and revegetate the original Bunning trail from the Bunning/Jamieson junction running south.

We think that the renaming of the Jamieson Trail is a great disappointment, and a denial of history, given that Rick originally established the track, before in 2000-2001, it was developed into the fire trail we know today”. The BMA is in the process of investigating this situation.

6) Recently, the BMA raised the need for a directional sign to be placed at the junction of Wattle St. and Bowen Mountain Road with Hawkesbury City Council, in order to reduce confusion between Lt. Bowen Road (Rd) and Lt. Bowen Drive (Dr) for delivery drivers, emergency service vehicles and visitors. We are pleased to report that Council then manufactured this sign, which has recently been erected at the start of Wattle Street.



*Design and photo courtesy of John Wulff*

7) Optus Telecommunications Facility Development Application:

In November 2021, Optus lodged a Development Application to build a 33.5 m high telecommunications tower on the site of the current Endeavour Energy facility at 18 Lt. Bowen Road. This tower will be within approximately 15 metres of houses on either side – well short of the minimum



100 m or 300 m required by zoning for such a facility. Whilst the BMA agrees that better mobile reception is needed on the Mountain, it believes that the proposed location of this tower is much too close to established homes and families and should be placed where it will not negatively impact residents by radiation, noise, visual landscape and diminished property values.

8) Facebook was active throughout lockdown with many people discovering the bushwalk trails around Bowen Mountain and documenting these walks during a challenging year with some excellent and poignant photographs. We hope you have enjoyed these photos.

The BMA is planning entertaining activities for

2022, which are on the advanced calendar in this newsletter and will be dependent on COVID restrictions. The BMA will be on annual holidays during December and January and will resume meetings in February 2022. We would like to thank the Bowen Mountain Management Committee and the subcommittees for all their tireless work throughout 2021 as they strive to make Bowen Mountain a quality environment for all to enjoy. On behalf of the Bowen Mountain Association, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry, healthy and safe Christmas and a 2022 filled with peace, happiness, good health and success.

*Bill and Alison Kerr*

President and Secretary, Bowen Mountain Association

## **BOWEN MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY EVENTS 2021- 2022**

**REPEAT ITEMS:** BMA COMMITTEE MEETING: Second Monday of every month

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to COVID 19 Restrictions all of the dates and venues below are subject to confirmation and at the moment are only proposed.

<b>DATE</b>		<b>ITEM</b>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> 3pm - 7pm</b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Venue to be announced</b> <b>Christmas in the Park</b>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>BMA Dinner – St. Patrick's Day- TBA All Welcome.</b>
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>MAY</b>	<b>Monday 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Sunday TBC</b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>Winter Interlude – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Monday 11<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Date and Venue TBC</b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>BMA Dinner</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>BMA AGM – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>Monday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b>
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Sunday 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>Halloween Happenings – Bowen Mountain Park Hall – All Welcome</b>
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Date and Venue TBC</b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>BMA Dinner</b>
<b>DECEMBER</b>	<b>Monday 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>BMA MEETING – Bowen Mountain Park Hall</b> <b>Christmas Party</b>

**Note:** Dates may be subject to change depending on weather and other factors. Due notice will be provided.

# PARK REPORT

Bowen Mountain Park Management Committee (BMPMC)

## Sun Dial

The gnomon (from Greek γνώμων, gnōmōn, literally: "one that knows or examines") has been replaced and is now casting its shadow on the plate of the sundial. Read the time using the Roman numeral numbers on the outside. See the picture. The shadow cast by the gnomon is on 11am EST. It was cloudy on the day so it is not a very distinct shadow.

## The Sun Dial Garden

This garden has had a "make over" with weeds and agapanthus replaced with natives. The latest plantings (20th November) were three Grevillea 'Lady O' a hardy plant that will attract smaller birds eg the Eastern Spinebill which has been seen in the area (see the photo).

## Fig tree planting

A Port Jackson Fig, *ficus rubiginosa* (ht. about 700mm) was planted in the park to replace the oak tree that was taken out December, 2020. "Rubiginosus" Latin, means rusty in reference to the underside of the leaves. Thanks Patricia for the donation. It should grow into a spectacular tree and

provide plenty of shade. Life span greater than 100 years! A number of birds feed on the fruits.

## Hall Book Library?

The table outside the park hall has been a convenient place for swapping food and books during the lockdown. It is now clear. There have been suggestions of having a book library at the hall. If anybody is interested in establishing and maintaining one please contact the BMPMC.

## Hall Bookings

Booking requests can be made by following the links on the web site

<https://www.bowenmountain.org.au/bookings/booking-community-room/>.

Scroll down and fill in the Hall Booking Request form. Submitting the form will send an email to the Booking Officer. Please check your emails for a reply (check spam). Make sure you reply promptly so as to arrange payments and hall inspection.

See you in the park! *Colin Chesterman*, Chairperson

*Louise Hawkins*, Secretary



An opportunity to catch up during the fig tree planting (20 November)



Eastern Spinebill  
pic Jim Thompson Maitland  
Mercury Sept 2



## THE GANG GANG COCKATOO – AN ENDANGERED SPECIES ?



The Summer 2020 edition of the BMA newsletter featured the Gang Gang cockatoo photographed by Lance Mitchell on the front cover. Gang Gang

cockatoos are regular visitors to Bowen Mountain bushland. Recently, the Federal Environment Department announced that it was considering whether to include the Gang Gang cockatoo on the endangered species list, as it was fast becoming a threatened species due to a loss of habitat. A spokesman for the Environmental Department commented that over the last 21 years the population had declined by 69 per cent. Due to the 2019- 2020 bushfires the Gang Gang cockatoo had suffered direct mortality and habitat loss. The University of Queensland is developing a climate change management plan which will focus on protecting cockatoos from rising temperature and natural disasters such as bushfires. The key threats to cockatoos are the loss of breeding hollows in trees, which they rely on to nest.

In order to assess if the species is threatened and will be placed on the endangered species list a rigorous scientific assessment of the species threat status is being undertaken. The Gang Gang will be listed as endangered if it meets at least one of the criteria on the assessment criteria.

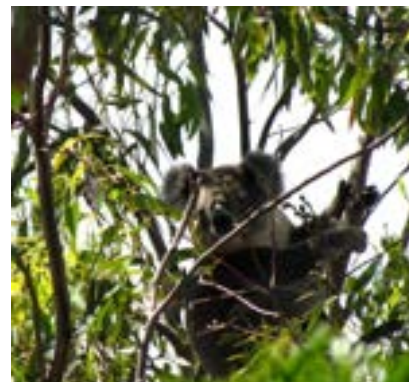
Reference: Canberra Times, 24.7.21

### Koala at the corner of Currawong Crescent and Bellbird Crescent

A week ago we were surprised, first by some very loud grunting across the road from our place. Then we managed to spot a fairly large Koala happily feeding in a tree near the intersection. He or she seems to like it there. We all hope it is sensible and aware of the traffic in that area.

This is the second sighting of a Koala in that area. The first was in November 2020.

*John Wulff*  
*Robin Woods*



### Aims and Objectives of the Bowen Mountain Association Inc.

- To provide a forum for the owners of land and residents of Bowen Mountain to meet and discuss matters relating to the area.
- To thoroughly investigate, assess and when appropriate to pursue any matter, thing or purpose which will be of benefit to or which will improve the quality of life and amenity of the neighbourhood.
- Take an interest in the affairs of Government whether Local, State or Federal and any statutory authority of any such Government and when appropriate to make submissions or proposals to such Governments or authorities on matters affecting Bowen Mountain or the Hawkesbury District.
- To participate in, assist and support matters pertaining to Bushfire control, mitigation and prevention.
- To establish, foster and maintain an active interest in and to encourage respect and regard for the preservation of indigenous flora and fauna.
- To promote, to provide and organise social activities for the benefit of members.
- To act either alone or in association with other bodies, corporations or persons in furtherance of any or all of the Associations objects.
- To raise funds, acquire, own, lease, rent, hire, mortgage and dispose of any property, including real property and expend any monies for any purpose which directly or indirectly may be associated with the attainment of any or all of the objects of the Association.



## The Beautiful Waratah

The first Nations people who lived in the area that became Sydney, were the Eora people who named this vibrant species – ‘Waratah’ which means beautiful or a tree with red flowers.

The botanical name, *Telopea speciosissima* is equally appropriate. *Telopea* comes from the Greek *telopos* meaning seen from afar, referring to the conspicuous red flowers and *speciosissima* from the Latin *speciosus* meaning showy and *issimus*, most.

This species is found within of 200km radius around Sydney and on 24 October 1962, *Telopea speciosissima* was named the floral emblem for the state of New South Wales.

Robert Brown a Scottish born naturalist who sailed with Sir Joseph Banks on the Matthew Flinders expedition to chart the coastline, named the genus and species in 1810 and kept the Eora name for the plant.

The Waratah belongs to the Proteaceae family and grows between 3 and 4 metres high with dark, razored leaves. It naturally grows in sandy clay areas and is mainly pollinated by birds such as the Honey Eater. It flowers from September to November. Nature has looked after this beauty because the seeds are winged for wind dispersal and there may be more than 250 seeds on one flowerhead in a good year. After bushfires, a Waratah can regenerate from its lignotuber – a woody swelling of its stem that lies partly or wholly underground.

Other varieties include the new interspecific hybrids. This includes a yellow form of the Tasmanian Waratah crossed with a New South Wales type, and another with a beautiful ivory white flower which has been bred from the Gippsland type, crossed with the New South Wales Waratah. The advantage of these plants is that they have hybrid vigour, making them much more adaptable in an average garden.

Before white settlement, Waratahs were reputedly

placed in a bowl of water so the sweetness and life of the flower would flow into the water. This was then used to strengthen children or cure them from disease.

Waratahs once flourished in many parts of the Sydney metropolitan area. Sadly, the survival of the native plant is due now to its existence in national parks, reserves and relatively inaccessible areas where it is protected.

Over the years, the Waratah has featured on postage stamps and in many works of art. (Several have been featured on covers of this newsletter). The magnificent stained-glass windows in Sydney’s Town Hall feature the Waratah. Some may remember Sydney once hosting a Waratah Festival. In the sporting world, the Waratah is the mascot for the NSW Rugby Union team. Waratah Day is 26 September.



Source: Booderee National Park

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2021 GRADUATING STUDENTS  
YEAR 10 and YEAR 12.



We are very proud of your persistence, resilience, initiative and success in what has been a most challenging year of schooling.

WE WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS IN YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVOURS.  
THE BOWEN MOUNTAIN ASSOCIATION AND ITS COMMUNITY

## Spring & Summer Edition - FIRE REPORT

While the Hazard Reduction undertaken at the northern end of Bowen Mountain during August completes a series of hazard reductions within the western area of the national park, when weather conditions permit, Grose Vale Brigade, the NSW RFS and NSW National Parks will continue to undertake local Hazard Reductions. With this in mind, it is timely to remind residents of the need to remain vigilant for the ever present threat of bush fire regardless of the time of year or weather conditions.

**Bush Fire Season:** the Bush Fire Season for the Hawkesbury will begin on the 1st October 2021 and will continue until the 31st March 2022 unless otherwise advised.

**Pile Burns:** if you are planning to undertake a pile burn, you will need to undertake the following:



1. Review the Hawkesbury City Council Open Burning Policy, complete the online form at [https://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/\\_resources/forms/open-burning](https://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/_resources/forms/open-burning)
2. Notify the NSW RFS of your intention to undertake a pile burn by completing the online

notification at <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/BFDP/burn-notifications>

3. From the 1st October, you will also require a Fire Permit which may be obtained by contacting the Grose Vale Brigade's Permit Issuing Officer.

Further information is available from the Hawkesbury District Fire Control Centre on: 4560 6400 and the Hawkesbury City Council website: [https://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/\\_resources/forms/open-burning](https://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/_resources/forms/open-burning) or contacting Hawkesbury City Council on 4560 4444.

**NOTE: Hawkesbury City Council advises the following:**

1. Pile burns and other fires must be put out by the end of the day and not smoulder overnight.
2. Within the Bushfire Danger Period, burning shall only be conducted between 8am and midnight on any day (the fire cannot burn all night).
3. Outside the Bushfire Danger Period, burning shall only be conducted between 8am and 5pm on any day (the fire must be out by 5pm).

### PREPARE YOUR BUSH FIRE SURVIVAL PLAN WITH FOUR SIMPLE STEPS



#### STEP 1 - DISCUSS WHAT TO DO IF A BUSH FIRE THREATENS YOUR HOME

Many households find that having a discussion over dinner works best, as everybody is together and focussed.



#### STEP 2 - PREPARE YOUR HOME AND GET IT READY FOR BUSH FIRE SEASON

There are simple things you can do around your home to prepare it for a bush fire, such as keeping the grass low and having a cleared area around your home.



#### STEP 3 - KNOW THE BUSH FIRE ALERT LEVELS

If there is a fire in your area, you will find its alert level on the NSW RFS website and in the 'Fires Near Me' app. You need to keep track of the alert level so you know what you should do.



#### STEP 4 - KEEP ALL THE BUSH FIRE INFORMATION NUMBERS, WEBSITES AND THE SMARTPHONE APP

In a bush fire, it is important that you stay up to date on conditions in your area.

It is a fact. If you and your home are well prepared, you stand a better chance of surviving a bush fire. Download the four simple steps today from the NSW Rural Fire website at:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/bush-fire-survival-plan>

### Know Your Risk:

A bush or grass fire can happen at any time but the risk is higher during the warmer months, when bush, grass and the scrub is drier. Even if your home is a few streets back, you may be at risk. You can check for bush fire prone areas in your location by checking the Hawkesbury City Council website (look for Bush Fire Prone Land Map) or on the NSW RFS website at: <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/building-in-a-bush-fire-area/planning-for-bush-fire-protection/bush-fire-prone-land/check-bfpl>

**If you live in an area surrounded by bush:**

- Fires in bushland can be hot, intense and fast moving





- *Burning embers may be blown ahead of the fire front, landing on your home and starting spot fires or setting fire to your home*
- *Embers may continue to land for many hours even after the fire front has passed, so you will need to patrol your property for several hours after the fire front has passed*
- *Smoke will likely impact your area making it difficult and sometimes dangerous to leave*
- *The radiant heat from a fire may set fire to your home and surrounds*

#### **If you live in an area surrounded by grasslands and paddocks:**

- *Grass fires can start easily and spread quickly, destroying homes, paddocks and crops*
- *Grass fires can move much faster than a bush fire catching people unexpectedly. They can be very hot producing huge amounts of heat killing anyone caught in its path*
- *As grass dries out it can catch fire more easily*
- *Fires in tall grass will have tall flames that may burn across trails, roads and fire breaks*



#### **If you live in an area where the bush or grasslands meet built up areas:**

- *Fires can spread quickly from parks and reserves and may threaten your home, fences or gardens*
- *Thick smoke from the fire can make it difficult to see or breathe*
- *Even if you live a couple of streets from the bush you area at risk of ember attack*
- *Burning embers can travel long distances through the air setting fire to homes even a few street back*



#### **Keep yourself informed on days of increased fire danger**

If a bushfire is in your area or you are unsure, its important to stay up to date.

In an emergency, call **Triple Zero (000)**, check the NSW RFS website ([www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au)), download the **Fires Near Me** app, listen to local radio, local **ABC**, TV etc or check [facebook.com/nswrfs](https://www.facebook.com/nswrfs) or [twitter.com/nswrfs](https://twitter.com/nswrfs)



#### **Total Fire Bans:**

On very high to extreme fire days, bush and grass fires are more likely to spread and cause damage when the weather is very hot, dry and windy. Therefore, to reduce the risk of fires damaging or destroying life, property and the environment, the NSW RFS Commissioner may declare a Total Fire Ban.

Total Fire Ban means; **no fires out in the open**. During a Total Fire Ban you cannot light, maintain or use a fire in the open, or to carry out any activity in the open that causes, or is likely to cause, a fire. **No general purpose hot works**, such as welding, grinding or gas cutting can be done in the open and the NSW RFS strongly recommends activities such as using a tractor or slashing on rural properties and acreage, be carefully considered.

**Can I use an electric BBQ?** – you may to use an electric barbecue for cooking as long as it is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating, and no combustible material is allowed within **2 metres** at any time it is operating.

**Can I use a gas BBQ?** - You may use a gas barbecue under the following conditions: It is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating;

- No combustible material is allowed within **2 metres** at any time it is operating;
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water; and
- The barbeque is within **20 metres** of a permanent private dwelling such as a home; or
- The barbeque is within a designated picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest.

**Can I use a BBQ or pizza oven that burns solid fuel** (e.g. wood, charcoal, heat beads)? - **No**. A barbecue or wood fired pizza oven that uses solid fuel, such as wood, charcoal or heat beads, cannot be used

## Spring & Summer Edition - FIRE REPORT contiued

outside during a Total Fire Ban.

**Can I undertake a pile burn during a Total Fire Ban if I have a fire permit? - No.** Permits are suspended on days of a Total Fire Ban. Permits may resume after the Total Fire Ban is lifted, as long as the permit hasn't expired. Contact your Brigade Permit Officer or Hawkesbury FS Fire Control Centre for further information

**Are there any exemptions during a Total Fire Ban?** - A range of activities may be exempt from Total Fire Bans. The NSW RFS Commissioner is responsible for exemptions to Total Fire Bans and these exemptions are detailed in the NSW Government Gazette each time a Total Fire Ban is declared.

**What penalties are there for lighting a fire during a Total Fire Ban?** - Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts an on the spot fine of **\$2,200**. If the matter goes to court, you could be subject to a fine of up to **\$5,500 and/or 12 months gaol**. Penalties for a fire that escapes and damages or destroys life, property or the environment can attract much greater fines and gaol terms with maximums at **\$132,000 and/or 14 years gaol**. Civil law suits can also be brought against the person responsible for a fire by those seeking compensation for losses sustained.

**What is a No Burn day?** - The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) may prohibit the burning of fires in the open or in incinerators by issuing a No-Burn Notice if it is of the opinion that, because forecast weather conditions, burning is likely to contribute to the build-up of air pollution. To find out if a No-Burn notice is in force check the EPA website or check the Public Notices section of the Sydney Morning Herald. A No-Burn notice will be published in the newspaper on the day it is in force; or call the EPA Environmental Information Line on 131 555.

**New Members:** Grose Vale Rural Fire Brigade welcomes new members and if you are interested in joining your local Brigade please contact Hawkesbury District Fire Control Centre on 4560 6400 or find us on [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/grosevalebrigade) search for Grose Vale.

*Grose Vale Brigade Community Engagement Officer - Greg Walker*



Source: ABC News Video 10 October, 2019

## Notes on some of our summer migratory birds

As we enter another summer, most of our many spring/summer visitors of the feathered kind are now back and breeding.

About 10% of the almost 200 bird species recorded in our beautiful little area are primarily summer visitors. Most arrive from Sep to Nov, and most depart between Feb and Apr. Arrival times tend to be much easier to monitor – the majority of these species are arriving to breed, which means they are seeking and marking out their breeding territories and attracting mates. This means they are vocal and active from the time they arrive.

If you listen to the early morning bird chorus from September to November, you're likely to hear several newly arrived birds. The earliest tend to be two superb singers, the Rufous Whistler and the White-throated Gerygone. Another has a less attractive voice – the honking Channel-billed Cuckoo, the world's largest cuckoo, which looks and sounds prehistoric. Unfortunately for some, they often call at night –if they decide to blast out a few calls as they pass directly over your house, you'll know it.

Most of these species have either gone quiet, or departed, by March or April.

In recent years, I have noticed some interesting changes to our summer visitor number. Three in particular have shown notable increases in recent years. Interestingly, all are birds which make use of Western Sydney Dry Rainforest, an endangered vegetation type which survives largely on private properties in the hills around Bowen Mountain and Kurrajong. Also, all of these birds are northern birds spreading south – part of a wider trend and another indicator of changes in our climate.

The most spectacular is the Scarlet Myzomela. This is a tiny honeyeater just 10 or 11 cm in length, and

with the male sporting a spectacular scarlet head and chest. Despite their colour, they often remain almost invisible in their treetop haunts. However once you learn their distinctive cheerful whistle, they can be heard throughout our area. A few years ago, I usually came across a few in Oct and Nov. They are now common throughout the area in spring and summer. In our area they particularly favour the wetter, taller forests along creeks, but I often hear them in the villages too.

Another increasing visitor is the Black-faced Monarch. This little insect eater is often found in similar habitat. They arrive locally in September and depart in March. Whilst difficult to spot, once you learn their strong clear whistle they can be heard widely, and will feed in gardens with thick shady patches featuring turpentine and other shady trees. A few years ago I was occasionally recording this species in our area, but for the past three summers rarely go a day without hearing its call.

The Rufous Fantail has a similar story. They are a shy but beautiful sight, showing flashes of orange-rufous as they fan their tails in the leaf cover. Last summer the Rufous Fantail had a terrific breeding season – probably due to the unusual volume of rain and excellent conditions. At summer's end, we were seeing 6 or 8 birds in feeding flocks in our garden, which was unprecedented.

If you are keen to attract more of these smaller local visitors to your garden, try and retain some areas of thicker vegetation where they can shelter from more aggressive, larger species. For most bird species, a totally tidy garden is not very attractive – a patch of dense cover here and there is ideal! Remember that the council nursery down at McGrath's Hill is very good and very affordable if you are looking to create some good bird habitat in your garden.

*Eric Finley*





## Culinary Corner

Tis the Festive season ... here are some Christmas treats.

### BRANDY TRUFFLES

#### Ingredients:

2/3 cup evaporated milk  
180g cooking chocolate, roughly chopped  
2 ½ cups crushed plain biscuits  
½ cup icing sugar  
1 cup chopped walnuts  
1/3 cup brandy  
coconut  
¼ teaspoon ground cumin

#### Method:

Heat milk and chocolate until chocolate melts and mixture thickens, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, add biscuit crumbs, sugar, walnuts and brandy. Mix well and allow to stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Shape into balls and roll in the coconut.

Keep in the refrigerator. Makes about 72 truffles.

### PORT and PUDDING ICECREAM

#### Ingredients:

Serves 6-8 (Great for the leftover Christmas cake or pudding)  
2 ½ cups crumbled cake or pudding  
½ cup port  
1 litre softened vanilla icecream  
200g cream cheese

#### Method:

Combine cake with port and mix well. Add icecream and cream cheese. Pour into moulds and refreeze.



*St. Matthew Close Kept Recipes, New Norfolk, Tas.*

### SPARKLING STRAWBERRY AND LEMON FIZZ

#### Ingredients:

250 g strawberries  
125 ml (½ cup) Lemon and Lime cordial  
750 ml sparkling wine or lemon flavoured sparkling mineral water, chilled

#### Method:

Combine strawberries and cordial in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook for 2 mins until strawberries start to break down. Cool slightly. Blend until smooth. Strain through a sieve. Discard solids. Chill for 2 hours. Divide mixture among glasses and top with wine or mineral water.

### Cherry Ginger Slice

#### Ingredients:

125g margarine  
½ cup sugar  
1 cup self-raising flour  
1 cup rice bubbles  
¼ cup chopped preserved ginger  
1 tablespoon golden syrup  
pinch salt  
½ cup coconut  
¼ cup walnuts  
¼ cup chopped glace cherries

#### Method:

Melt margarine and syrup over a low heat. Mix all other ingredients and pour over melted margarine. Press into a lamington tin and bake in a moderate oven for approximately 30 minutes. Cut while still warm.



## CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PROJECT.

### BREAD DOUGH SCULPTURES.

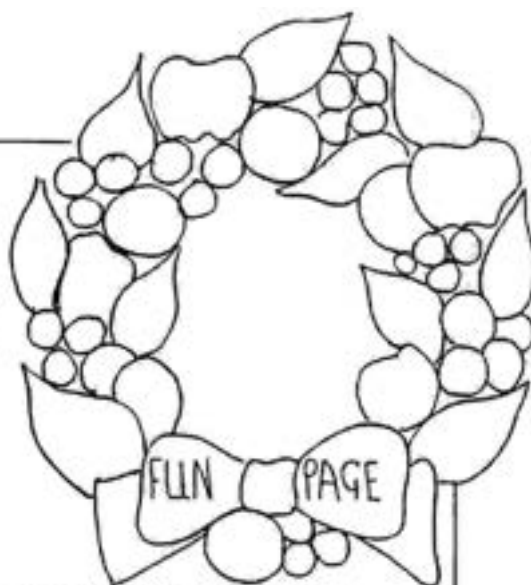
#### To make dough

4 cups Flour: } mix dry ingredients,  
1 cup Salt: } add water slowly,  
1 1/2 cups water: } mix, knead about 10 mins.

#### ALSO NEEDED

Baking tray: Acrylic paints:  
tooth picks: brushes:  
foil: oven: thin wire for hangers

Work with the bread dough in the same manner as you would work with clay. Start by pinching off just enough dough to start your Project. Cover remaining dough so it will not dry



### TO MAKE A SNOWMAN

Make a small ball for the head. Lay on the foil and press lightly so the back will flatten. Use a toothpick to poke the two eyes. Roll a tiny ball for the nose. Wet spot where nose will be placed. Press nose onto face. Shape body.

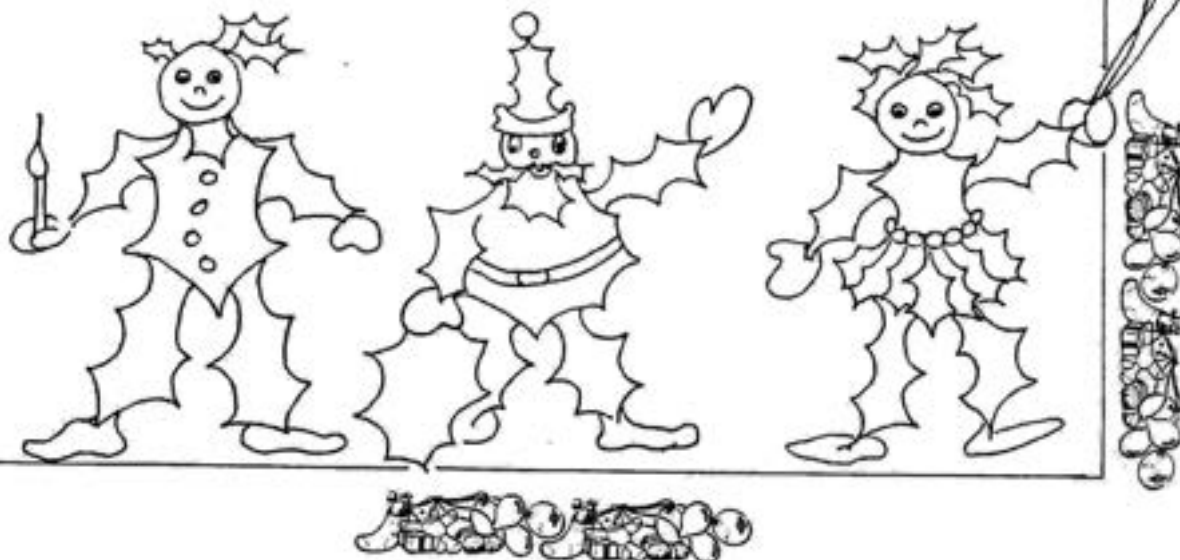
Attach head and body by wetting slightly areas to be joined. Continue in this same manner, making and attaching scarf, hat trim and tassel. (Scarf and hat trim bend around but do not go all around the back of snowman.) Press in small wire loop for hanging.

Remove from foil and place on baking tray. You may want to use a spatula to do this.

Bake in a pre-heated oven at 325°-350° F. Allow 1/2 hour per 1/4" thickness for baking. This will probably be about one hour. Dough will be firm to touch and a light tan colour. Cool thoroughly.

The finished sculptures may be brightened with acrylic paints. A clear plastic spray finish will add a final shiny touch.

### SOME HOLLY PEOPLE TO COLOUR IN



## Community Notices

### CRAGO OBSERVATORY

The Observatory is operated by the Astronomical Society of NSW and is located at the northern end of Lt Bowen Road, about 200 metres past the gate on the fire trail.

**Crago Observatory is closed for renovations. No public or member observing nights are currently available.**



**For further information, and to confirm Friday openings, contact Paul Hatchman 0413 047 782 or VP\_Crago@asnsw.com**

**Community Care** assists residents of our community in need of assistance with transport to medical appointments, local social events, or general information regarding Hawkesbury Community Services.

**Community Care** organises social morning teas and luncheons for residents in the Bowen Mountain Hall. Transport is available if needed. Please check the newsletter and web-site for social events.

Phone: Liz Rowan 4572 2416

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Have you thought about going renewable? A home solar battery system can provide you with clean energy, reduce your energy bills and help you become more self-sufficient.

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Search online NSW **Empowering Homes** or visit

[energysaver.nsw.gov.au](https://energysaver.nsw.gov.au)

Reference: Hawkesbury Bushcare Newsletter 'Weed All About It' 2020, Vol 21 Issue 1

[https://  
www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/your-  
spaces/bushland-management/  
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