



# SOUTH TURRAMURRA ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION (S.T.E.P.) INC.

NEWSLETTER --- OCTOBER 1986.

Yvonne Langshaw, President.  
26 Chisholm Street,  
Turramurra. 2074. 449-1541.  
Pam Morse, Secretary, 449-3875.

A.G.M. REPORT. The 1986 year was one of achievement for S.T.E.P. A full report of the year's activities is contained in the President's Report attached. The following office bearers for 1986-7 were elected:-

- President: Yvonne Langshaw 26 Chisholm Street, 449-1541.  
TURRAMURRA. 2074.
- Vice President: John Burke 116 Browns Road, 487-3680.  
WAHROONGA. 2075.
- Minute Secretary: Sue Jones 40 Howson Avenue, 449-4718.  
TURRAMURRA. 2074.
- Correspondence Secretary: Pam Morse 10 Duff Street, 449-3875.  
TURRAMURRA. 2074.
- Treasurer: Geoff Suggate 43 Bowen Avenue, 449-4029  
TURRAMURRA. 2074.
- Committee: Helen Petersen, Alan Catford, Jenny Simons, Bernard Power,  
Margaret Booth, Glenn Johnson, Elizabeth Dokulil.

On the financial side S.T.E.P. ended the year with a satisfactory bank balance brought about by sound financial management. It will be essential to maintain our funds bearing in mind increases in routine expenses and the statutory expenses deriving from maintaining the status of incorporation.

Following the business meeting, Helen Petersen spoke about her award-winning bush regeneration projects in Ku-ring-gai and showed a superb set of slides. Helen outlined how bush regeneration started in the Municipality as awareness dawned of the various threats to the bush including weed infestation. Support has increased markedly since the early pioneering days of the Bradley sisters who devised minimal disturbance weeding. Many people are now employed and large sums of money being spent by councils such as Lane Cove, Willoughby and Warringah.

Weeds proliferate due to urbanisation processes causing nutrient build-up and concentrations of water by run-off. Native plants are not adapted to high nutrient levels. Dumping of garden refuse exacerbated the problem.

Fraser Park was the first C.E.P. job to be funded in Ku-ring-gai in 1984. Helen trained five young people, over a year, who thus made a valuable contribution, working as a small team together, gaining confidence and skills. The slides of Fraser Park show "before and after" illustrating the transformation and general healing of areas. Helen's other projects include an area in Davidson Park, East Killara containing some rare eucalypts, Hona Reserve Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga, and an area next to the Bush School, Burns Road, where a small group of volunteers will work alongside Council workers.

BROWNS FIELD C.E.P. PROJECT. This project will finish in four week's time. Extensive areas of weeds have now been removed allowing for regeneration to take place. Several hundred trees and shrubs have been planted, all propagated from material from the site with the help of the Council Nursery and S.G.A.P. Members.

SPRING IN THE BUSH. It has been an excellent year for flowers in our bushland areas. The heaths were in bloom for the S.T.E.P. Spring Walk in the Howson Oval/Mitchell Crescent area and on the recent walk for the St. Andrew's Neighbourhood Program, in addition to many Boronias and Baueras, a rare species of Darwinia biflora was sighted. This has been reported to Ku-ring-gai Municipal Council and in turn to the National Parks and Wildlife Service which maintains a register of rare and endangered plant species.

WIRES. (WILDLIFE INFORMATION AND RESCUE SERVICE.) We had occasion to put this service to the test recently. During the St. Andrew's walk a Magpie dropped its dinner, a baby nestling, on the track. WIRES advised trying to return the nestling to its parents who would be frantically searching for the baby. This was tried by wiring an ice cream container containing the baby to a tree in the vicinity and observing from a distance. This proved unsuccessful perhaps because the bird had been dropped some way from its nest. Further advice was given on feeding and releasing the bird when its species is determined. The bird is doing well and growing apace on a diet of fresh insects and moistened dry dog food. Phone No. for WIRES is 977-5380 for friendly and expert advice.

MAPS. Our project to produce a walking track map of our bushland areas is proceeding slowly. Margaret Booth would welcome help with walking the known tracks and plotting them on the draft map. Phone 449-3746 if you can help.

BUSH REGENERATION PROGRAM. Our voluntary group meets on the fourth Sunday of the month and spends a couple of hours removing weeds from the bush, commencing at 2.00 p.m. Our proposed program is as follows:

- November )
- February ) End Rothwell Road near Montrose Street, Turramurra.
- March )
- April )
- May ) Creek, Cooper Crescent, Wahroonga.
- June )

Contact Yvonne Langshaw 449-1541 for further details.

BOTANY OF THE MOTOR CAR. (Extract from the Science Show by Dr. Nigel Wace, head of the Department of Biogeography and Geomorphology at the Australian National University, who specialises in trying to discover the many ways that plants are distributed.

In industrialised countries like Australia, the motor car dominates the lives of the citizens from the cradle to the grave. Many of us make our first journey in life in a car--from maternity hospital to home. Cars occupy a most important place in our sexual display, in our courtship and in our mating activities. Every day ten people are killed and more than 250 injured on Australian roads by motor vehicles. And however we die, many of us make our last journey in a hearse. Birth, mating, mortality and death--for most of us, the motor car occupies some place in all of them.

If the motor car plays an important part in our individual lives, it has a far more obvious effect on our community life. The very layout of modern cities such as Canberra has been largely determined by the motor car. The dour impact of motor traffic on cities, the noise and air pollution, and the gigantic costs of highway construction are only some of the less desirable social effects against which to weigh the flexibility, the comfortable mobility and the convenience of easy personal transport in which to visit places far beyond easy reach on foot or horseback.

So much for our own species--but how about the effects of the motor car on other species with whom we share the land? The corpses of kangaroos, possums, cats and rabbits beside the highways show that at least some larger animals do not mix with motor traffic much better than the young of our own species. As for smaller creatures: who has not had to wash the spattered remains of insects off the windscreen or headlights, or brush them out of the

radiator grille after a long drive across country? These are all destructive effects of direct conflicts in which the motor car must, in total, have some effect on the mortality of various animals. But if animals suffer in conflict with motor vehicles, plants often get the better of cars. How many cars die in collision with roadside trees? And how many plants are dispersed by having their seeds carried around by cars? The answer to this last question is of considerable interest to agronomists, quarantine authorities and to farmers who are trying to control the spread of weeds. It is also of interest to those who try to understand the evolution and spread of plants; especially since motor cars have become so abundant and ubiquitous during the last fifty years. To get an idea just how important plant dispersal by the motor vehicle may be in our society, reflect for a moment--how many motor vehicles are there on Australian roads today? (More than 7,000,000.)

If you want to see how many and what kinds of plants the motor car involuntarily carries around, it is best to go to a car-washing establishment. Every carwash has a settling tank where all the coarse grit sinks and can be trapped, and where most of the oil can be skimmed off. This skungy sediment is the key to the botany of the motor car. The washed sandy remnants were mixed with sterile potting mixture and set out in germination trays in a glasshouse. 10,566 seedlings were counted during the course of 27 months sampling.

Grasses were by far the most abundant plants; nearly 8,000 (40%) grass seedlings belonging to some 50 species. The total number of species was probably 300 or more. About half the seedlings are common weedy colonising species. Almost all of them are species which have been introduced into Australia since the beginnings of European settlement nearly 200 years ago, and they are mostly natives of north-west Europe, the Mediterranean, or temperate North America.

For those plants which can cope with the often rather inhospitable conditions beside roads, species in Southeastern Australia such as wireweed, clusterclover, subclover, ribwort and fleabane, and for numerous weedy grasses, it is hardly surprising that they are so widespread and abundant. The motor car not only dominates our personal lives and rearranges our cities. It may also be rather important in rearranging some of the plant world as well.

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MEMBERSHIP. If you haven't yet renewed for the 1986-7 financial year, please do so as soon as possible. S.T.E.P. needs your support to be an effective force on the local conservation scene.

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S.T.E.P. MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 1986-7.

NAME: Family Membership \$5.  
 ADDRESS: Single Membership \$5.  
 Concession \$3.  
 PHONE:

TO: The Treasurer,  
 Geoff Suggate,  
 43 Bowen Avenue,  
 TURRAMURRA. N.S.W.

449-4029.

...of direct conflict in which the motor car must, in fact, have the effect on the majority of various animals, but it animals suffer in conflict with motor vehicles, plants often get the better of cars. How many cars die in collision with road-side trees? And how many plants are destroyed by having their seeds carried around by cars? The answer to this last question is of considerable interest to zoologists, particularly ecologists and to farmers who are trying to control the spread of weeds. It is also of interest to those who try to understand the evolution and spread of plants, especially since motor cars have passed so abundant and unobtrusive during the last fifty years to get an idea just how important plants dispersed by the motor vehicle may be to our society, relief for a moment from many motor vehicles and cars on Australian roads today. (from page 100, 101.)

If you want to see how many and what kinds of plants the motor car (road-vehicle) carries around, it is best to go to a car-washing establishment. Every carwash has a washing tank where all the cars get their wheels and tires washed, and where most of the dirt can be cleaned off. This slurry, which is the key to the botany of the motor car, the water sandy remains were placed with sterile holding mixture and set out in germination trays. A glass house, 10,000 seedlings were counted during the course of 22 months growing.

...of the total number of species was ... about half the seedlings are common many colonists ... almost all of them are species which have been introduced into Australia since the beginning of European settlement nearly 200 years ago. One half the mostly natives of north-west Europe, the Mediterranean, or from North America.

...of these plants which can cope with the often rather inhospitable conditions of the roads, species in southeastern Australia such as ... clover, subclover, ribwort and thistle, and for many more weeds, grasses, etc. It is hardly surprising that they are so numerous and abundant. The motor car has only diminished our personal lives and rearranged our cities. It has also been important in changing some of the plant world as well.

...If you haven't yet looked for the 1911-1912 financial year, please do so as soon as possible. I.L.S. needs your support to be an effective force on the fact conservation scene.

...1911-1912  
 ...1912-1913  
 ...1913-1914

...The Treasurer  
 ...13 Lower Macdonald  
 ...1914-1915  
 ...1915-1916