



Friends of Bats Newsletter

August 2024

Upcoming Events with live flying-foxes

Science in the Scrub - Sunday 11th August 2024, 11:00 – 15:00 - Western Sydney Parklands, Hoxton Park

Science in the Swamp - Sunday 18th August 2024, 11:00 – 15:00 - Centennial Parklands, Sydney

These are public events and members are encouraged to attend. If you are thinking of going, do let sydneybats know, especially if you would like to help hand out brochures for an hour or two.

Previous Event - Blue Mountains Bat Night

In spite of the weather being awful, there was a big turnout at the Blue Mountains Bat Night. We were busy all night; Haley, Cary, and Sarah did most of the work on the display, while Tim did a formal talk.

Cary also spent a bit of time with Tom (Sarah's partner) and their two kids going round the rest of the displays and activities, and says it was well organised, busy, and fun.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/gsBdMJaeABm69j2J/>

Stunning nature series "Our Living World" narrated by Cate Blanchett

It's in four parts, and talks about the interrelationship of all living things. In Part Four, the second segment is about Australian flying-foxes in Sydney, and it's really quite good. Tim Pearson provided technical advice on filming. If you have access to Netflix, here is the link:

<https://www.netflix.com/au/title/81137426>

Habitat Loss and Disease: How Are These Connected?

A New Article by The Conversation

Alison Peel (Griffith University), Peggy Eby (UNSW Sydney), and Raina Plowright (Cornell University) discuss new research about disease transmission as reported in [The Conversation](#). The article highlights how planting trees and reducing land clearing can help lower the incidence of [Hendra Virus](#) in horses (and in rare cases, humans), and boost a bats natural protection.

Bats normally feed on eucalyptus blossom nectar, but when this food source is removed for agriculture and infrastructure, bats change behaviour and may desperately seek out other alternatives like introduced fruit trees that are near to horses. This proximity increases the risk of Hendra virus spilling over into horses. Drought especially in Australia is another factor that can contribute to lack of nectar availability for bats. Notifying horse owners of these risks, as well as giving the Hendra vaccine to their horses, is recommended to reduce the risk of spillover. Habitat loss is a big problem for many reasons, therefore safeguarding our natural environment is vital for the wellbeing of all species.

To reduce the likelihood of viruses jumping across to horses, as well as in rare cases like Hendra to humans (known as zoonotic spillover), we must protect and restore bat habitat. You can read more about zoonotic spillover by the World Health Organization [here](#).

Ku-ring-gai Flying-fox Reserve



Again flying-fox numbers have been unpredictable in Ku-ring-gai Flying-fox Reserve since the start of the year. Last summer numbers, fluctuated between 2,500-7,000. This was

followed by an early departure, with the reserve remaining empty between March through to early May. On 13th May there was a small group of 1,000 hanging out in the Taylor Street gully, though they were only there for a short period before leaving again. We thought it'd be unlikely to see any back in the reserve until spring, but an even smaller group recently returned – only 150 or so just hanging in a couple of trees adjacent to no. 4 and 8 Taylor Street. Patterns of occupation in this reserve have certainly changed but the animals know it is when they need to use it. And now, at the end of July about 1000 were counted.

From report by Chelsea, Natural Area Officer, Ku-ring-gai Council

Bushcare in Ku-ring-gai Flying-fox Reserve

Haley has been having great difficulty getting the 'once a month Bushcare Group' going because of weather. First Saturdays have been especially wet necessitating cancellations. Our little Tuesday group has not fared much better due to weather and other commitments. We have repaired an enclosure fence after Council removed a fallen tree, removed bracken from around young trees and removed countless weeds.

The Ku-ring-gai Flying Fox Reserve in Gordon is home to a wide range of bird species, including the iconic Powerful Owl *Ninox strenua*. Flying foxes form a key part of the owl's diet, along with possums, so it is no surprise that they choose to nest in the reserve each year! Volunteer bush regenerators were saddened to discover the body of one of these magnificent birds during a recent bushcare session. Examination suggests the bird was caught in a native sweet morinda vine *Morinda jasminoides* and snapped its neck during the struggle to free itself. Information about the bird has been sent to the Powerful Owl project and Ku-ring-gai Council.



You can read more about this project here:

<https://birdlife.org.au/projects/powerful-owl-project>

Photo by Jill Green

Picton Flying Fox Camp

Stonequarry Creek contained ~14,800 grey-headed flying-foxes during February and March. A nearby kindergarten called "Leaping Learners" found the sydneybats website and became a member of Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society. It would be wonderful if we had enough trained bat handlers/speakers to visit them with a flying-fox.

Gift Fund news

From March to June, an additional \$360 has been donated to the Gift Fund, by Adam Jaquier-Parr, Karen Sherwood and Andrew Moore, reaching a total of \$2755 for the financial year. We sincerely thank these generous people who enabled Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society to host the sydneybats website and cover costs of the education bats and all the associated expenses.

It is time to **renew your membership** for 2024-2025

Pay \$20 (for overseas members \$25) by direct deposit to:

Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society Inc.

BSB 032 083

Account 207854

Donations to the Bat Conservation Gift Fund

can be paid to:

Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society Inc.

BSB 032 083

Account 207862

Or

Via PayPal, go to the donate button on the website



<https://sydneybats.org.au/about-kbcs/bat-conservation-gift-fund/>

AGM

Notice is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting of Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society Inc. The AGM will be held on Wednesday 4 September 2024 at 7pm both on Zoom and at a home that is walking distance from Wahroonga station. Further details and Zoom information will be circulated shortly.

The AGM provides an opportunity for the Committee to present the Annual Report, Accounts for 2023 -2024 and to elect the Management Committee for the coming year.

Connect with us on social media!

