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# Joyous mark-making



'Chair on the deck with Wollumbin view'

by Tonia Haynes

Linda Frylink Anderson's work is a generous invitation to view the world through her eyes. She explains that her work is "an immediate response to what she sees."

Linda experiments with mark-making – she loves to scribble and play with line, colour and texture, and is guided by the incidental surprises that emerge when working intuitively with paint and ink.

Her unbound creative approach allows her to work freely wherever she may happen to be. The world is her studio and inspiration can be found anywhere. In this body of work, the Bundjalung bush, garden and view of Wollumbin from her home is her inspiration.

Using an abundance of colour, she paints and draws in a joyous, unrestrained manner. Paying homage to the natural abundance that surrounds us, her works acknowledge the devastation caused by fire and flood.

While the destructive force of these natural disasters will be forever etched in our memories, Linda's work looks



'Spring Flowers'

optimistically towards the recovery of the landscape, highlighting a collective feeling of hope.

While undertaking study at the Canberra School of Art, Linda began travelling with her partner, and in lieu of completing her degree in Visual Communication, chose to accumulate irreplaceable memories and experiences.

She returned to study after starting a family and completed a Bachelor of Education. After a dedicated life working in early childhood education, Linda became a full-time practising artist in 2015 in northern NSW.

Recently Linda has created Pique Assiette mosaics using recycled materials such as china, old jewellery, glass, mirrors and interesting collectibles. This she finds is a meditative practice, playing with patterns, themes and colours.



'Gymea Lily'



'Wollumbin in Cloud'

View Linda Frylink Anderson's artwork at the Nimbin Artists Gallery, at 49 Cullen Street daily from 10am to 4pm.

## Just landscapes

The Serpentine Gallery is hosting 'Just Landscape' from 12th to 22nd July. This large group show celebrates responses to the Australian landscape, a perennial subject that endures despite other trends in the art world.

Responses vary widely: some artists amplify and reflect its literal beauty, others use it as a platform to comment on political or cultural issues, and still others experiment abstractly.

The heritage of landscape painting in Australia spans from pre-colonisation to contemporary times, absorbing approaches from romanticism to abstraction, spirituality, and objective representation. Australians cherish landscape art for its beauty, cultural significance, and its role in supporting Australia's diverse ecosystems.

The exhibition will feature a range of approaches. Over 20 creatives will participate, including well-known figures like Dave Hickson, Michelle King, Susan Jacobsen and Di Ingram, alongside emerging talents. Some artists focus on representing sublime beauty.

While most exhibitors are local, many have drawn inspiration from places beyond their immediate surroundings.

Rhonda Armistead's painting of the Grampians, following the traditions of Von Guerard and Buvelot,

captures the vast, ancient grandeur of Australia with traditional skills such as depicting distance.

For others, landscape painting serves to express personal connections to specific locations. Artist Jane Hewetson, from Rous Mill, frequently paints a local creek she has visited for over 60 years – a place of solace during difficult times, presenting technical challenges like capturing light reflecting on moving water.

Anna Nordstrom employs contemporary strategies, mixing media to vividly depict the aftermath of the 2020 bushfires and subsequent floods. Australia's landscape, often indifferent to human needs, inspires these powerful artistic responses.

From Clifford Possum to Lloyd Rees and Elizabeth Cummings, Australia boasts a rich heritage of landscape artists, a tradition upheld by local artists in this exhibition.

The exhibition opens on Friday, 12th July at 6pm.

### Scarlet

From 26th July, join us for 'Scarlet', a group show by local artists exploring the sensual and the pleasurable.

Local artists have been invited to submit artworks which explore this theme in any medium, so this exhibition attracts a diverse array of



'Boroka Lookout, Halls Gap' by Rhonda Armistead



'Bushfire' by Anna Nordstrom

works for your viewing pleasure. Come and celebrate their creative expressions.

You're invited to join the opening celebration of 'Scarlet' from 6 to 9pm on Friday 26th July. Pop it in your diary. You are welcome to dress for the occasion. This is an adult-themed event.

Historically this has been a popular exhibition. Contact

the gallery if you have work that suits this theme and would like to participate. 'Scarlet' will run until 16th August.

Serpentine Gallery is located at 3/104 Conway Street, Lismore. Email: [gallery@serpentinearts.org](mailto:gallery@serpentinearts.org) or phone 0492-964-819. Web: [www.serpentinearts.org](http://www.serpentinearts.org)

# The fabric of life on show

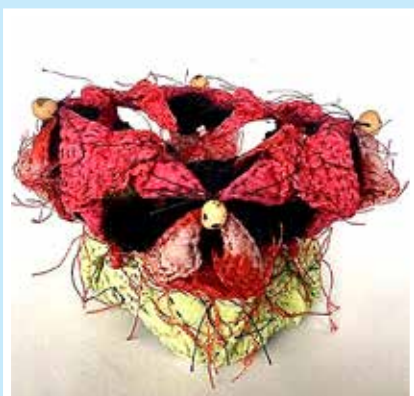


Handwoven and knitted clothing by Wild Weaver

The annual Fibre Show at Blue Knob Gallery is one we look forward to every year. Fibre artists and artisans in the area showcase their work in the endless variety of materials we call fibre. What holds us together? Family, kith and kin, community – the fabric of life.

The word kith is Old English, and its original senses/meaning were “knowledge”, “one’s native land” and “friends and neighbours”, according to the *Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*.

We felt, sculpt, weave, sew and embroider, taking what nature gives us and turning it into items that keep



A folding fascination by Sachiko Kotaka

our bodies warm or cool; transforming fibre for practical use and on into the creative realms of art.

The quality and variety of work on display each year continually excites. This exhibition will run until Saturday 31st August.

Visit the Blue Knob Gallery, Cafe & Ceramic Studio Facebook page. Email: [bkhgallery@inet.net.au](mailto:bkhgallery@inet.net.au) or phone 02 6689-7449.

• **Blue Knob Cafe** now has gourmet toasties, soup specials, cakes and coffee/drinks. With more to come on the menu, we look forward to seeing you on the verandah and continuing to support this adventure that is Blue Knob Hall. See our Facebook page for more info about the Café.  
• **Blue Knob Writers Group** meets



Japanese knot bags by Amanda Doran

weekly at Blue Knob Cafe on Sundays. For more info, contact Alex 02 6689-7268 or Helen 0487-385-134.

• **Blue Knob Choir** meets on Thursdays from 3.45 to 5.15pm at Blue Knob Hall. Everyone is welcome, just turn up, or for more info call Peter 0458-487-865.

## Vale Len Martin

Len was a long-time friend and supporter of Blue Knob Hall. The wonderful and dedicated contribution he made to the place over many years will always be remembered.

With love and great affection from all of us past and present who enjoyed his and Kay's company at Blue Knob Gallery. The memories are full of life, poetry and humour. So many laughs...



## LunaSea

'Creative Moonlighting' is an exhibition of works by Vivian Martin and Audrey Bunn at the Flourish Art Gallery.

Viv and Audrey's works combine drawings, paintings, prints and ceramic sculptures about our connection to water and the moon, the mystical and the magical, the ebb and flow of ideas, the subconscious, subliminal processes of the lunar cycle on our psyches, and our choices as humans in search of planetary survival.

The theme was triggered by a photo taken of Viv and Audrey at the first opening of the Flourish Gallery after the 2017 floods. This piece (pictured) is a humorous reworking of the picture, exhibited just three days before the March 2022 flood.

The Gallery was almost immediately flooded again in the March 2022 flood – hence the Moon and Water themes, as well as personal views on global warming and how it affects us now, here in the Northern Rivers and globally, into the future.

The exhibition runs until Friday 26th July, and is a commemoration of the Flourish Gallery's third re-opening.

Flourish Gallery is located at 15 Casino Street, South Lismore.

## Artists unite to save Wallum

Save Wallum, in collaboration with Gallery Cosmosis Byron Bay, announces an upcoming art exhibition and auction dedicated to raising funds for the preservation of the last 1% of wallum heath in Byron Shire.

The exhibition will commence with an opening event on Friday 12th July, 5.30pm at Gallery Cosmosis, located at 22 Brigantine Street, Byron Bay.

The evening promises live music, local brews, and delectable finger foods, providing a vibrant backdrop to the diverse showcase of artworks and the ensuing art auction.

Over 50 local artists, including Space Cowboy, Daniel Hend, Jay Manby, Sharon Shostak, Howie Cooke, Naomi Gittoes, Yao Mikami, Mark Cora and many more, have generously contributed to the exhibition. Their artworks span a range of mediums from captivating watercolors to intricate sculptures.

Patti Jacobs, owner of Gallery Cosmosis and curator of the exhibition, has been a dedicated supporter of the Save Wallum cause since late 2023.

"The Save Wallum movement resonates deeply with everyone who experiences the



'Wallum Sedge Frog' by Daniel Hend

natural beauty of this region," Jacobs said. "The ancient trees, banksias, and diverse birdlife inspire us all to take action."

The exhibition will be open to the public from 12th to 22nd July, offering an extended opportunity for art enthusiasts and environmental advocates to view and bid on exceptional artworks that support a critical environmental cause.

Local artists interested in contributing to this initiative are encouraged to contact Patti via email: [galleriescosmosis@gmail.com](mailto:galleriescosmosis@gmail.com)

## Call-out to local artists for community collaboration

Byron Shire Council is calling for expressions of interest from artists to explore the theme of 'Rising – the growing urgency and consciousness to meet climate challenges' as the next theme of Climate Conversations, a biennial initiative.

Artists are asked to submit innovative ideas for projects that will engage the community and can be presented around this theme at the Lone Goat Gallery in 2025.

The successful artist



or artists will receive an artist's fee of \$5,000 to develop new work, together with additional funds up to \$2,000 for delivery of public programs, and a one-month exhibition at Lone Goat Gallery, Byron Bay. The EOI is open to all

Northern Rivers artists, art producers and artist teams.

Anyone interested in this opportunity can apply via Council's website or at: [www.lonegoatgallery.com/climate-conversations](http://www.lonegoatgallery.com/climate-conversations)

Applications close on 1st November.

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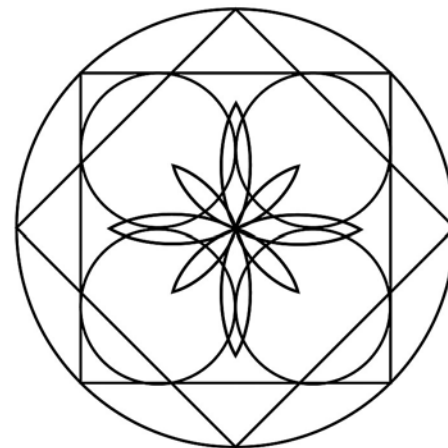
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# Science, lies and politics

Book review by Kitty van Vuuren

Reading this book has left me utterly disgusted with an Australian political and regulatory culture that ignores majority public demand in favour of minority interests; that risks the sustainability of our unique old growth native forest ecosystems; that reduces our ability to mitigate climate change and that undermines our democracy.

The author, one of the world's foremost forest ecologists, Professor David Lindenmayer brings alive the contradictions between science, economics and politics that underpin the conflict over logging of Australia's native forests, which are fast reaching a point of 'ecosystem collapse.'

Decades of poor forestry practices has damaged Victoria's giant Mountain Ash eucalypt forests, as well as old growth forests in other states, to the point where some of these can no longer regenerate. Their disappearance means that species that depend on them, such as Victoria's Leadbetter's Possum and Southern Greater Glider, and NSW's Powerful Owl and Yellow-bellied Glider face extinction.

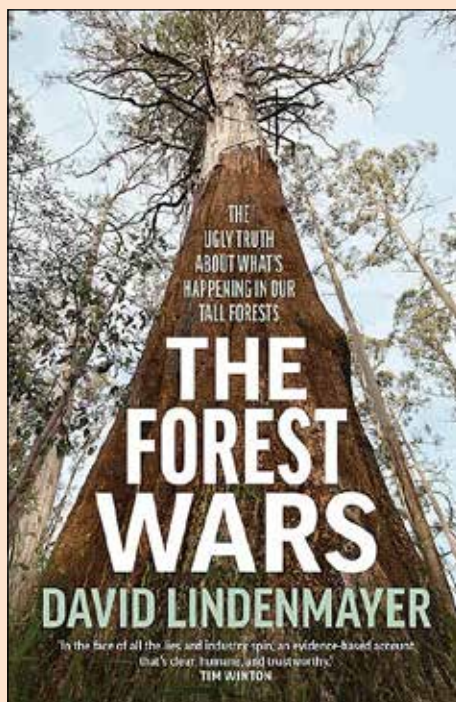
The book offers a convincing insight into the problems that plague this industry, with an analysis of 37 myths that inform current logging practices. These are organised into chapters covering logging and biodiversity; the impact of fire; the economics of logging old growth forests; regulation; sustainability; and the role of logging and national parks in mitigating climate change.

Lindenmayer points out that native forest logging mainly supplies woodchip and pulp for the export market to make paper and packaging that ends up in landfill a few years later. The sector contributes just 4% of sawn timber destined for the building industry; most of Australia's sawn timber is sourced from profitable timber plantations.

He reveals that native forest logging provides few jobs despite high levels of capital investment in large machines (not chainsaws) that cut the trees. But state-owned corporations continue to make losses compared to the plantation sector, at great cost to taxpayers.

Job opportunities in forest management focused on capturing carbon and increasing biodiversity are set to increase, according to Lindenmayer, and well-managed forests can attract tourists and rejuvenate nearby small rural towns.

He calls on governments for an immediate ban on logging of Australia's native forests. A survey conducted for the Australia Institute in April this year, found that 69%



of Australians support that call.

So why do governments continue to support an unprofitable business that is poorly regulated, wrecking our forests and pushing iconic Australian species towards extinction?

Lindenmayer points out that government agencies, including the NSW Forestry Corporation (with sitting government ministers on its board), exist solely for the purpose of logging native forests and behave as an arm of industry.

Its professional body, Forestry Australia ignores the science presented by forest ecologists, and the influence of the Construction Forestry Maritime Energy Union is particularly pernicious as it is one of the biggest donors to the Australian Labor Party (nearly \$2 million in 2022).

The revolving door of parliamentarians is another concern, with former ministers and senior staff shifting 'seamlessly' from government to industry, often as industry lobbyists with direct access to politicians. In Canberra, lobbyists outnumber politicians by three to one, and thousands of people representing particular interests have access to all areas of parliament.

Privileged access to state and federal government and their agencies is a threat to our precious forests and to our democracy.

David Lindenmayer, *The Forest Wars*, Allen & Unwin, 2024. RRP \$34.99 Ebook: \$20.99. Printed and Ebook copies can also be borrowed from the Richmond Tweed Regional Library.

# Koala trees on the verge

by Theresa Mason

Koalas were listed as an endangered species in NSW in 2022. They preside only along Australia's east coast in very small, isolated pockets. Ancient and iconic, koalas are expected to be extinct by 2050.

Our love for the koala, this cute fluffy symbol of Australia, is superficial and mean. Koalas are being starved, hunted, stressed, killed and ignored into extinction. The number one threat facing koalas is loss of habitat.

Koalas have extremely specific needs when it comes to food sources. Of the 934 native eucalyptus species in Australia, the five primary food trees for koalas within the Northern Rivers region are: Tallowwood, Forest Red Gum, Swamp Mahogany, Grey Gum and Flooded Gum.

Within these five species, koalas favour a very small number of food trees, depending on trace mineral elements drawn from the soil.

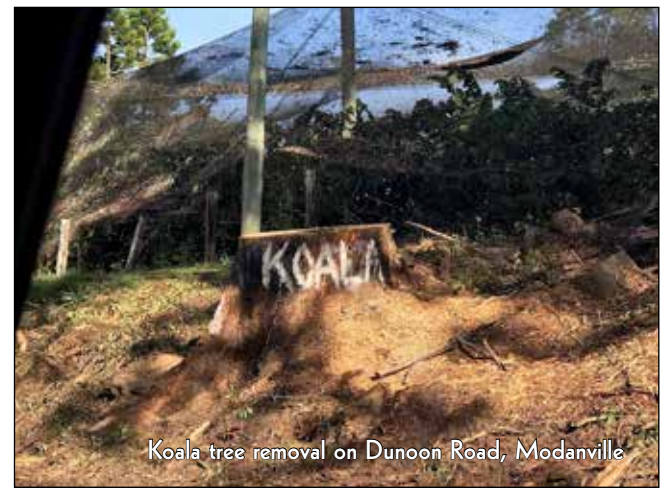
Motivated by the recent removal of four more big grandmother koala food trees along the road verge at Modanville, I attended the recent inaugural Koala Conversations Forum held at Southern Cross University.

Ironically, the uni had removed several established primary koala trees from the Rifle Range entrance and trimmed back koala trees on their Kellas Road entrance to fulfill the VC's whim to plant an avenue of jacarandas.

On the way to the conference I did a head count: 18 big primary koala food trees removed along a very short and koala-important 200-metre stretch of Dunoon Road at Modanville over the past 10 years or so, some several hundred years old.

The four recently-removed koala trees measured 1.3m, 1.2, 1.1m and 90cm in diameter. These forest red gums and tallowwoods are primary food for our locally endangered koalas. They were grandmother koala food trees.

Conference speaker, Clive McAlpine said, "The larger the diameter of trees, the more likely you are to find koalas."



Koala tree removal on Dunoon Road, Modanville

Habitat conservation is essential for the survival of the species. Preserving grandmother koala food trees is incredibly important. Angie Brace from Lismore's Friends of the Koala said, "Habitat loss is a political issue," saying it's hard to change legislation because of politicians' egos, and that we need to be louder to protect koalas.

I contacted the NSW Minister for the Environment regarding removal of koala primary food and habitat trees along local road verges. My correspondence was referred to the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) who determined that tree removal along a roadway is managed by Lismore City Council.

The EPA contacted Lismore City Council regarding tree removal and were advised that the matter is currently being investigated by Council. If you know anything, please let them know.

The EPA has determined that Modanville is not within Lismore City Council's Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management area.

They advise that changing planning laws, such as the introduction of tree preservation orders or modification of the koala management plan are matters for Council, and concerns should be raised directly with them.

There's a waterfall of protection for Endangered Species in various governmental levels, but a buck-passing of responsibility. My inquiries led me from the local to the state back to local government.

As I drive into Lismore, I read the sign: 'Koala Friendly

City'. The irony smacks you in the face.

Here we have this cute fuzzy Endangered Species on our doorstep, and an overwhelming absence of humanity. Koalas need our protection, starting with protecting their primary food trees.

Habitat loss is the number one factor affecting koalas. Deforestation, fragmentation, and tree removal causes koalas to travel further for suitable food and territory, raising stress levels as they navigate roads, dogs and fences, and raising the risk of the stress-related disease chlamydia.

Statistics have determined koalas are coming into care because of car strikes (36%); chlamydia, a sign of extreme stress in koalas (33%); dog attacks (13%); orphaned (10%); and tree fall (2%). Koalas in urban areas are 50% more likely to exhibit stress-related chlamydia.

Opportunities are open to landholders with 20 hectares or more of suitable koala habitat to enter into private land conservation agreements through Envive Environment, and there are funds available to support this level of protection, including discounts on rates and land tax.

Lismore council does have a tree preservation order on koala trees in their LEP DCP outlined in Chapter 14. This protection applies to urban, village, and rural residential areas. There are clear rules regarding endangered species and habitat trees.

If you see someone removing a koala food tree, report them! Koalas are on the literal verge of extinction. They need our protection and action.

# More illegal logging

by Susie Russell, North Coast Environment Council

Conservationists blocked entrances to the Pentarch Sawmill near Port Macquarie on 17th June following confirmation that it was receiving logs from forests in the promised Great Koala National Park.

The North Coast Environment Council (NCEC) believes that the logs being received at the mill include ones that are being cut illegally.

NCEC has notified the EPA that the Forestry Corporation is retaining less than half the legally required number of Koala Feed Trees in Orara East State Forest. We are still waiting for the EPA to stop



Koala Feed Trees being cut down and to enforce the law.

Earlier this year NCEC proved that the Forestry Corporation was not searching for Greater Glider den trees, and were logging within the legal requirement for a 50 metre buffer around all glider den trees. They are still doing it.

Extinction is forever and we say enough is enough.

Buying Pentarch floorboards is buying the homes of Koalas, Gliders, Forest Owls and Spotted-tailed Quolls. The same goes for woodchips from Australian Native Landscapes.

There is no future for companies that profit from the destruction. There is no future for Pentarch. The NCEC suggests they start making their exit plan.

# Forest Corp targetting proposed National Park

The NSW Forestry Corporation is logging in areas of the proposed Great Koala National Park at a rate more than three times the rest of Northern NSW, according to analysis by Forest Alliance NSW.

Based on Forestry Corporation's own maps as at 25th June 2024, of the 20 active logging operations on the North Coast from the Hunter to the Queensland border, more than half were in the Great Koala National Park footprint.

That is despite the proposed park area containing just one fifth of State Forests in the region.

The Minns Government committed to

create a Great Koala National Park at the 2023 State Election and has since established a long-winded process to determine the boundary of the park.

Justin Field from Forest Alliance NSW said, "Clearly the Great Koala National Park area is being targeted for logging by the Forestry Corporation.

"They know the direction the Government is heading and they are making a mockery of that commitment.

"The Minns Government needs to step in and stop this destruction if the park is going to be the reserve Koalas need to survive."

# Lost and found

by Scott O’Keeffe, ecologist

The Parma Wallaby (*Notamacropus parma*) is the smallest of the pademelon group of Australian macropods. They’re about the size of a large cat and weigh around 4kg.

Their fur is grey or slightly reddish and their undersides are paler. Parmas have a white throat and pale cheek stripes. Parma Wallabies live for four to six years and mature to adult-hood in their first year. Females give birth to a single baby that remains in the pouch for seven months.

Parma Wallabies are small, inconspicuous and very timid. They inhabit Wet Sclerophyll forests with dense undergrowth, or the ecotone with rainforest. These areas are often in hard to navigate country. Since they are also solitary and nocturnal, it’s small wonder that few people know about them.

PWs were once more widespread than they are now. In the south they have been extirpated from the Illawarra district, and they no longer occur in any coastal forests. They are now found only in forests of the Great Dividing Range between Gosford and the Queensland Border.

In fact they are so cryptic that following the first description of them by the English naturalist John Gould, in 1840, they were not

seen again for 125 years and were thought to have gone extinct.

The PW diet consists mostly of grasses and herbs that are browsed from small forest clearings that the PWs enter at night. These feeding sites are the only places where one might see two or three Parma Wallabies together. Parma Wallabies may have a role in maintaining forest health by dispersing subterranean forest fungi, which is another, albeit small, part of their diet.

Parma Wallabies have never been common. Their continuing decline prompted the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to list the Parma Wallaby as Vulnerable (to extinction) under the *EPBC Act* (1999).

The processes that place them at risk are land clearing (including logging), degradation of remaining habitat by fire and invasive weeds, and predation by cats, dogs and foxes.

The conservation advice that goes with the declaration contains a fairly comprehensive prescription for protecting Parma Wallabies. However, as the wild populations of the PWs are all in NSW, the federal agency declines to implement a national recovery plan and devolves responsibility for conservation of



Parma Wallabies to the NSW government.

If you follow the issues related to government regulation of the forestry industry, you will understand why I think this is folly. Forestry in NSW is essentially carried out by a business that regards any oversight of the public forest resource as interference. The Forestry Corporation has one objective: to extract timber.

The world-renowned ecologist David Lindenmeyer in his latest book, describes the trail of ecological destruction and political corruption brought about by the NSW Forestry Corporation. (See *review opposite page*.) Unfortunately, some populations of PWs live in

forests “managed” by the NSWFC, which means they are at risk.

As part of its glibly-named Saving Our Species Program, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has published a document that is supposed to be a long-term conservation strategy for the Parma Wallaby.

As an ecologist, what I see in the document is just a tabular list of the processes that threaten the PWs. The responses to these threats are pretty much the usual vague commitments to following best practice and engaging stakeholders. It’s unclear what specific activities might be possible, but whatever they are, they will only be carried out if they are “feasible and cost effective”.

The document doesn’t provide a timeline, clear objectives or any indication of an appropriation or fund activities. The document can be viewed here: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspeciesapp/project/1152](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/savingourspeciesapp/project/1152)

In closing, I need to point out that we have a responsibility for our neck of the woods. That includes keeping a watchful eye on one of the local areas where Parma Wallabies occur. There are two conservation reserves in the nearby Bungabbee State Forest (near Bentley). The Bungabbee and Muckleewee Nature Reserves were excised from the State Forest in order to conserve a number of rare and threatened biota, including the Parma Wallaby.

The PWs occur in the conservation reserves, but also in the enclosing state forest. The Forestry Corporation of NSW’s operations map shows the two conservation reserves as permanently protected. The map of the surrounding state forest area does not show any areas that are scheduled for logging.

However, that could change, and there is always the possibility of illegal logging. The Northeast Forest Alliance claims this may have happened on previous occasions in the Bungabbee State Forest. We need to watch for any indication that the status of the reserves might be revoked or varied.

We should also be monitoring the logging schedules of the NSW Forestry Corporation.

# The geology of the Nimbin Valley

by David McMinn

The geology of our valley may best be thought of in terms of four layers. The basement consists of a thick sedimentary layer overlain by three layers of differing volcanic rock types. These layers strongly determine the soils, landforms and the native vegetation found in our beautiful area.

## Walloon Coal Measures

These Jurassic sediments were deposited about 210 million years ago and are composed of layers of claystones, fine and medium grained sandstones and coal seams.

The latter could be up to a metre thick, and four mines have operated near Nimbin in the past. Coal Mine Road, off Kyogle Road, is the only indication that this mining occurred in our region.

Fortunately, the deposits were only marginal and never exploited on a large scale. The Walloon Coal Measures form the bed rock of the region and are exposed where the overlying volcanic deposits have been eroded away. Plant fossils and petrified wood may be found in the shales.

These sediments weather rapidly into podzolic soils, a soil type that exhibits a marked change in colour between the top layer and

the lower layer. They tend to be acidic and of low fertility, especially the sandy podzolic soils, and usually support eucalyptus forest.

## Lismore Basalt

This was produced in the first phase of the volcanic eruption cycle about 20 million years ago. The lava flows spread out over much of the Northern Rivers, covering the original landscape of sedimentary rocks. It can be quite thick; in some areas up to 530m.

In high rainfall areas, the basalt weathers to deep red soils rich in iron and aluminium oxides and are acidic throughout the profile. Rainforest was most commonly found on these clay loams, before the land was cleared for dairy farming around 1900.

Under more moderate rainfall conditions (ie less than 1400mm), the basalt weathers to produce chocolate soils, which have

a higher mineral content than the red soils and are thus more fertile. Even so, they tend to be deficient in molybdenum, sulphur and phosphorus. These soils support rainforest, as well as wet and dry eucalyptus forests.

The chocolate and red soils have deep weathering profiles that are very prone to land slippage in heavy rainfall events, such as occurred in 2017 and 2022. This is even more of a problem if the slopes have been cleared of vegetation. With other soil types, land slippage is less of a concern.

## Nimbin Rhyolite

Overlying the Lismore Basalt is the Nimbin Rhyolite, which consists of volcanic rocks with higher silica content than found in basalt. It is resistant to erosion, giving rise to the dramatic cliffs in our valley, the most spectacular of which are the Nimbin Rocks.

The rhyolite weathers into podzolic soils that are highly acidic and of low fertility. Eucalyptus forest is the main vegetation type growing on these soils.

## Blue Knob Basalt

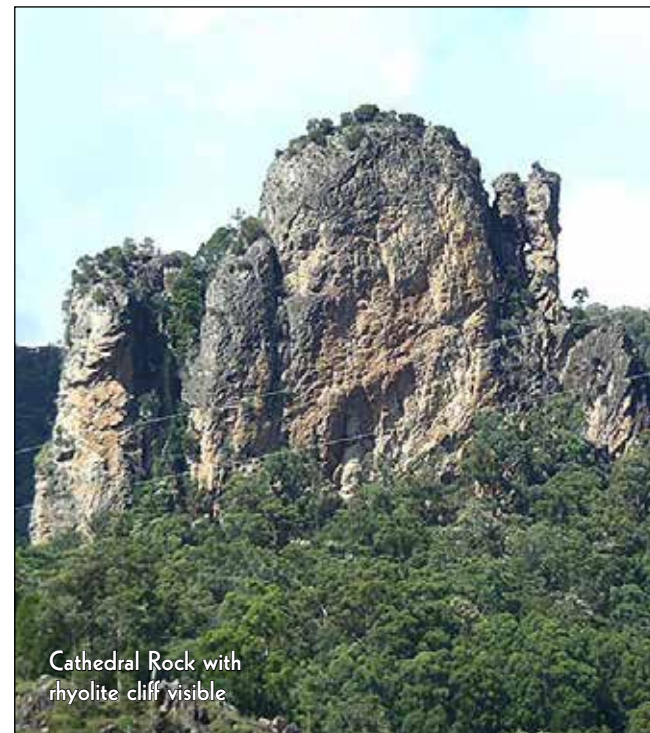
This was formed in the final phase of the volcanic cycle from the Wollumbin volcano. Much of it has been eroded away over the past 20 million years and only remnants remain. It forms the top 200 metres of Blue Knob and also occurs in the highest parts of the Nightcap Range.

Soil type is important in forest regeneration. It may be more suitable to plant rainforest trees on the red soils and eucalyptus species on the low fertility podzolic soils for the best outcomes.

With deep chocolate soils, you can plant rainforest or eucalyptus species, much would depend upon the annual rainfall and fire threat.



Blue Knob viewed from the south



Cathedral Rock with rhyolite cliff visible



Protestors Falls



by Peter Brooker

When Christine left her two and a half acres for a couple of months, nature did what it always does, it moved in, and after she returned the rain started and the rain turned soil to mud forcing the ants to build protective towers all over the place that made mowing a little uncomfortable.

Even so, Christine still has dreams, she wants a food garden and a medicine garden so as Rudyard Kipling wrote, "If you can dream and not make dreams your master, if you can think, and not make thoughts your aim, if you can meet with triumph and disaster, and treat those two imposters just the same," you can, and will, achieve your dreams.

So with that in mind, Christine started making paths so she could safely move about the garden – one such stepping-stone path made with pavers spaced to match her step – and using those paths to safely navigate her land, she began restoring her garden.

While Christine is pursuing a food and medicine garden, she also has many types of ornamentals such as a drift of clivia, a Lady slipper vine, a climbing rose and a bougainvillea that, along with the mulberry tree is part of an aerial layering



experiment.

Christine has also planted an array of beautiful trees from the old favourite, the flame tree, to a Japanese maple, a few leopard trees or *Libidibia Ferrea*, a dahlia tree and a pine known as the 'pink house pine' because it grew from a pine cone Christine found at a pink house.

The food trees consist of paw paw, custard apple, lemon, a finger lime growing in the discarded ash of the fire, two apple trees, the Dorset golden with its slight pink blush on yellow skin and firm sweet flesh and an Anna, a sweet red-skinned apple but it is yet to fruit, a seedless Valencia, a tamarillo, a navel orange and a red banana, not to be confused with the supermarket one that has been dipped in wax.

Part way around the garden some of the 25 attending members grazed on the clover and breathed in the pungent aroma of basil while admiring the pineapple sage. Black bean trees, *castanospermum*, are used to stabilise the soil; their seeds

are toxic but Aboriginal people know how to remove the toxins. The trees are welcome gifts in Asia as they believe they bring good luck.

Bamboo grows around the house, but towards the creek where the path has been lost, a suspected *Dendrocalamus membranaceus*, or giant bamboo, grows. It can grow to 28 metres high and 15cm diameter. It is a Taiwanese bamboo used in construction, but its shoots can be eaten, so perhaps it belongs in the edible garden.

Christine still dreams of her medicine garden, and dreams are good as Langston Hughes tells us: "Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken-winged bird, that cannot fly."

A big thank you to Christine for allowing us to wander through her garden. A very enjoyable couple of hours.

Our next meeting will be at Mandie Hale's property, 2/269 Upper Tuntable Falls Road, at 2pm on Saturday 20th July. As always, please bring a chair, a cup and a plate for afternoon tea.

## The art of giving a shit



View from the loo  
by Stuart McConville

Drifting out of the gloaming consciousness of full-blown anesthetic recently, I had a blissful thought that the end of the world was coming and it was just fine!

Afterwards, the realisation that I'd been in a place of ultimate acceptance sort of bothered me, so I had to have a hard conversation with myself about it.

Am I a harbinger of doom or just an old boy scout being prepared for the worst while working towards the best?

There are times where I feel like nothing will save us from our ecological mess, but more likely I am solution-focused and resolved to earth repair. Commitment to a path rather than attachment to an outcome helps keeps me sane.

If I am experiencing this, then being on a spectrum of hope vs despair is probably true for many of us. It is like sitting on a see-saw where at your end there is a shark waiting and at the other end your play partner

is just losing weight and getting sicker.

How does society respond to this on a collective consciousness level? I think this question is something well worth investigating, as our behavior will be strongly influenced by how we react.

History has no lesson to teach us equal to the ubiquitous threat of runaway climate change. However, scaled down slow-paced disasters are a frequent occurrence.

A recent example of this might be the parties in Berlin at the end of WW2 when the realisation finally dawned that the allies were going to overrun the city.



Denial had flourished under a wave of Nazi propaganda, an easy task when denial is our default setting when it comes to an existential crisis.

As it became clear the end of the Reich was near, the civilian population took to either a stoic last-man-standing attitude, sending old men and children to fight the battle-hardened Allies; or to partying hard and adopting nihilistic (and hedonistic) behaviour.

This is probably a model we will emulate over the next 20 years or so as climate disasters take the denial option away from us.

The option to blow off steam and dissociate from reality is a viable way of dealing with stress and anxiety, up to a point.

Sex is also a great way to escape, and to guarantee the immortality of your genes. After all, the baby boomers were a consequence of a collective attempt to re-populate after the last war.

This is a good example of the collective consciousness looking after the future of our species. Perhaps we need to breed faster to increase the chance of a few climate change evolutionary adaptations. (Cooling fans on our heads!)

Frequent small, manageable and meaningful changes to the way we live, the fight-back option, are also capable of reducing climate change anxiety.

With every positive change, you know you are contributing to the health of the planet.

You become part of the collective that gives a shit, connecting you to the Earth and taken to another level, which can give spiritual meaning to life.

Of course, the best way to do this is to use a composting toilet and start every day with the transcendental experience of giving a shit.

Stuart McConville runs Pooh Solutions Compost Toilet and Waste Water Services  
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## Whales and dolphins on show near Angowrie



by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

On a sad note, our foundation President from 2005, well-known Nimbin local Len Martin, has recently passed away.

Len and Kay did the groundwork to establish the club and its early success and strong membership enabled the club to thrive, that has continued to this day.

The club now has almost 50 members and its two walks a month are always well attended. Thanks Len, may you rest in peace. Condolences to his family and friends.

Finally, some good weather for us to get out and about. Earlier last month we had a gorgeous day out with the walk from Ballina to Lennox Head along the coastal trail and beaches.

It is a very popular walk and always well attended, by 18 on this trip. There was plenty to enjoy with the variety of terrain, regenerated rainforest, headland and secluded beaches. Thanks Megan, for organising.

With the great weather we also had a weekend away at Lake Arragan in the Yuraygir National Park near Broomes Head. 12 campers spent two to five days enjoying this relaxing area.

The walk was to Angowrie on a perfect, blue sky and no wind day, with views up and down the coast and conditions ideal to spot numerous whales breaching as they headed north, and closer to shore, schools of dolphins wave-riding and jumping.



## Walks programme

Sunday 21st July  
Rocky Creek Dam  
via Dunoon

Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498

Meet: At Rocky Creek Dam picnic Area at 9am. Some nice walks around the dam plus 'The Big Scrub Loop' in the Nightcap National Park. One of the last areas of Big Scrub lowland, to have subtropical rainforest with small creeks. On tracks, but as usual some can be uneven and slippery.

Bring a small towel as we need to take off boots, ankle deep, to cross the causeway over Rocky Creek. Good walking shoes/boots needed as well as water and lunch. A nice after-walk get-together at the picnic area. Numbers limited; register with Peter early to guarantee a spot.

## Sunday 11th August Unicorn Falls and Whiskey Creek in Mount Jerusalem National Park

Leader: Peter Moyle 0412-656-498

You must register with Ron, as numbers are limited.

Grade: 3-4. This is the first section of the four-day walk to Minyon Falls. Slippery conditions after rain, but mainly on well-defined tracks. Good footwear needed. Bring water, lunch and hat.

Meet: Two locations: 9am at the primary school in Uki, or if coming from the coast, at Uncle Toms Pies near Mullumbimby at 9am. Ring Peter to organise car shuttle and to register.

# The spaces between

by Suzy Maloney

I had a beautiful experience recently that highlighted an aspect of horse training that I feel deeply affects how our horses respond to us.

I had the opportunity to work with a new horse who I was familiar with, but we'd never done a session together. He was a pacer who had raced all his life and then found himself in a new home where he had paddock rest for a long time.

I'd been told about his training regime as a performance horse. He had a lovely race trainer who never abused him, but who did train in a traditional manner. The horses' bodies were conditioned to be fast and strong; their emotional and mental well-being was not an aspect of this style of training.

He did quite well and raced for quite a few years. The result was a horse who knew his manners, was very aloof and who became narky toward people when something went wrong, or he had pain.

When I took him into the training yard he was suspicious, and as I asked him to do a simple task, he became elevated and avoidant. I downgraded what I was



asking for and he gave me one little try.

Immediately I stood at his head and relaxed. He looked away, so I asked him gently to face forward. He looked the other way and I asked again. After a while he could stand with me without needing to avoid the space we were in. Then he began to relax.

At that point I asked him to do the task again. This time he was a bit more confident and did it easier and quicker. I stopped and stood calm and still. He took less time to relax and stand with me this time.

We continued in this manner for the whole session, and at one point I realised that he had never in his life experienced a full connection with a human. It almost brought tears to my eyes.

By the end of the session,

he had achieved several tasks easily and could relax and stand with me. I could by then feel a strong and healthy connection between us, and for the first time he even enjoyed someone rubbing his forehead.

After the session, which had evolved organically and intuitively, I asked myself what had just happened. We spent most of the time doing nothing. At least two thirds of the time we were just standing together.

Yet after this session his personality changed, and he wanted to be with people. He didn't walk off as quickly as he could after feeds but hung around to enjoy human company. He was happier in himself and easier to do everything with. And future sessions in the training yard were a breeze.

I realised that what I offered him was space. His experiences with humans had been all about pressure. Pressure to do this, pressure to do that. I gave him lots and lots of space between the doing.

Over and over again I removed 100% of the pressure. In these moments he then had the opportunity to relax and digest what we had just done. He didn't need to hold up his protective walls. He couldn't really because I didn't give him anything to protect against or push against. Then when I next asked, he was open and receptive. I kept my asking small and within his capabilities and earned his trust in one session.

I was thinking about music. If we just played notes one after the other, it would sound dreadful. It's the spaces we put between the notes that makes the beautiful melody. The spaces between when we are working with horses are more important than the work.

I'm clear on this now. This is especially true with horses who in the past have been treated like a machine. It's in the spaces that the connection and trust is created.

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## Making life interesting for equines

by Les Rees

I constantly see photos of people having so much fun with their horses, getting up to all sorts of games and sports that involve jumping over obstacles, racing between them, leaping from high platforms and now the latest craze to get towed through the water while riding in a blow-up dingy.

It stuns me how much horses are willing to put up with in order for humans to participate in such things, especially since they bear absolutely no resemblance to the way horses live in the wild.

All of these activities involve a lot of work for them, and I often find myself asking if they actually enjoy it. I'm not having a go at those who do, I've had a lot of fun on horses too but now, having worked with traumatised horses, I've been seeing a lot of things that I find disturbing.

We live in such a competitive world these days and people are constantly trying to impress their peers by doing something more and more extreme in order to get attention. The thrill-seekers constantly find new ways to satiate their egos and those that involve horses are often unaware of the amount of pressure they're putting their horses through.

It's important to ask if your horse is OK with this. If so, is your horse physically and mentally fit enough to participate. How far is enough for your horse?

I've seen top trainers make this mistake, pushing those they are teaching into impossible situations. One young horse that had been exceptional throughout the lesson was eventually pushed over the edge because of further demands beyond the horse's capability. The girl who was riding him was bucked off and the horse was whipped. Is that fair?



This is the reason so many potentially amazing equine athletes fail on the ladder to success. The lesson learned here is that the horse cannot trust humans!

I've been around horses for most of my life, and it has taught me to be considerate towards them. They are not amusement machines; they're living sentient beings that deserve to be treated with care and respect. I'd never push a horse to do something that wasn't fun for both of us.

I find it interesting to see how a horse responds to going out for a ride at its own speed. I've done this many times in the forest, allowing the horse to choose the path it wants to take. I do this because it teaches me to observe the things that horses choose to do.

Sometime they trot off down a track and stop half way to investigate something in the surrounding area that takes their interest, which often I may not have observed myself. Other times they

turn around and go back the way they've come and then turn back again.

It's fun for them to be an equal partner in the choices of where to go. It teaches me a lot about how they view the world and helps build a close and trusting relationship because it frees the horse to have fun too.

There are many different ways to include fun for your horses; you don't necessarily need to be riding them to play together. Go for a walk with them or play an imitation game by copying what your horse does; they find that quite amusing.

Stand beside them and gently rock them from side to side, stroke their favourite places, thank them for moving when you want them to.

It's all about how much you give back in return for all their kindness in allowing you to sit on their backs.

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