



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

ABN 97093480659 P.O. Box 896, Balgowlah, NSW 2093
northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au

email northhead@fastmail.fm
Newsletter No 9 September 2013

Getting to know North Head's bushland

Spring is the time when North Head's bushland is at its best. **Join a 2-3 hour guided walk with Geoff Lambert.**

Walks will be held on Sunday 15 September (10am start), Saturday 28 Sept (2pm start) and Sunday 13 October (2pm start).

All walks will begin with an overview of the area using the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust's big map. Meet at the Gatehouse Visitor's Centre off North Head Scenic Drive (parking in Bluefish Car Park) 10 minutes before scheduled start time. Bookings essential. Limit 20 people. Email: twsombat@optusnet.com.au or call 9949 3521(ah).

AGM

Thank you to Dave Thomas for a very interesting talk. We need to protect our seas as well as land.

Thank you to Charlie Taylor for supplying an enjoyable afternoon tea esp the cucumber sandwiches

Your Team since our AGM

President	Matthew Taylor
Vice President	Geoff Lambert
Secretary	Kathy Ridge
Treasurer	Jenny Wilson
Committee Members	
Dennis Foley, Steven Johnston, Judy Lambert, Paul Lancaster, Katie Meyer, Toni Stevenson and Judy Reizes	

Education Centre – Bandicoot Heaven

Our Education room is open every weekend, from 10am to 4pm in Building 20. Call in and see us for a chat or for information about the new tracks. Work has started for one from the Q Station roundabout into North Head Sanctuary, more next month.

Native Plant Nursery

We have been making use of our igloo. It now contains cuttings, seed trays and seedlings for future plantings.

Planting continues. We have had a couple of new volunteers, it's good to have more helping hands.

International Fleet Review

Sydney 3 to 11 October 2013

This review celebrates the centenary of the first entry of the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet into Sydney. There are many events on during this time. For more info, please see <http://www.navy.gov.au/ifr/>

Caladenia carnea



One never knows what one will find on North Head. This orchid was out in August near North Fort. There is always something to see on North Head.

Q Station Community Open Day

Sunday 22 Sept, free entry. We will be having a stall there. For more information please see www.qstation.com.au

Measuring odours at North Head

Judy Lambert
Welcome news from Sydney Water. They have recently advised that they are purchasing state-of-the-art hydrogen sulphide monitors, to be installed on the STP site and at various other points around North Head. Hydrogen sulphide levels will be measured and logged regularly as part of a process of trying to track down and address the source of the bad smells that waft across the area from time to time.

Meeting with Sydney Water

Thursday 12 September at 4pm

Sydney Water is planning to replace the Northern Suburbs Ocean Outfall Sewer (NSOOS) odour scrubber at North Head. The scrubber ventilates and treats air from NSOOS and the plant's underground screening area. Meeting will be held in Bandicoot Heaven, please come and hear the update.

The sundew

Peter Macinnis

Many years ago, I trained as a plant taxonomist. A lot of the details have since eluded me, and I concentrate instead on temporary obsessions. Carnivorous plants that trap and consume animals, live in swampy, sandy places with almost no nitrogen and phosphorus. They are adapted to living there. The sundew or *Drosera*, is a local example—and a temporary obsession of long standing. Where the Venus fly-trap snaps shut, the *Drosera* is stealthy. Its leaves have hairs that make sticky droplets which give it its name. The droplets contain proteolytic enzymes that digest the insect's proteins. The protein breakdown products make the leaf curl over to bring more droplets into contact. In this way, *Drosera* absorbs insects' phosphorus and nitrogen. When I was a student, I collected three species on North Head (it was legal back then): *D. binata*, *D. spatulata* and *D. peltata*, I think. These days, that sort of collecting is far from legal, and I prefer to find and photograph them anyhow.

One of the things I puzzle over is the bright red colour of the leaves in some of the rosette plants. The redness is fairly widespread but variable, and I have also seen it in Western Australian species, and that brings me to an unresolved temporary obsession: why are they often red?

I have a partly-baked theory that the plant must have to work hard to stop the enzymes breaking down its own proteins, and that the red may have something to do with either that or maturity.

You can see rosette-type *Drosera* plants on the western side of the mesh track, about 100 metres south of the gun park, and on the western side of eastern-most part the track that goes around the wetlands. Look on wet ground for red patches up to 5 cm across.



A keen breeder of such plants told me many years ago that if you grow a *Drosera* in a pot, if you give it fertiliser, it stops making droplets. Clearly, this is one smart plant!

If you want humanely to watch one work, put a meat sliver on a leaf.

Please use careful enunciation if you offer to show somebody carnivorous plants. I disappointed a local teenager once, because he thought I had said Cannabis plants, but he still enjoyed feeding the sundews.



Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

The Antillian was a vessel of 5608 tons, owned by the West India and Pacific Steamship Company, of Liverpool, and was built at Greenock, Scotland in 1898. Her dimensions are: Length, 420.8ft; beam, 49.2ft; depth, 21.9ft. Fitted with triple expansion engines, she was regarded as a thoroughly up-to-date craft of the time.

When she arrived in Sydney from Cape Town on 2 March 1901 to take Australian troops to South Africa and the war, she had a sick sailor on board. The Board of Health ordered that Olaus Olsen, aged 19, be removed to the Quarantine Station where he died the following afternoon - 3 March 1901 and was buried in the Third Cemetery. Cause of death was bubonic plague.

The Antillian and all her officers and crew were held in strict quarantine and the ship fumigated to destroy the rats which were believed to be the carriers of the disease. On 26 March 1901, the Antillian was released from quarantine by The Board of Health.

North Head Sanctuary Foundation

If you would like to support us by becoming a member, please download a form at www.northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au/join/membership.htm or email northhead@fastmail.fm

Please also email if you would like to receive our monthly email newsletter.