



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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Next General Meeting

7pm Wednesday 21 May 2014 at Bandicoot Heaven (Building 20, former School of Artillery). Our guest speaker will be Dr Jen Anson from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy. Find out about helping with fauna surveys and monitoring over the next few months.

Education Centre – Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20. Call in to have a chat or gather information. If you'd like to help others get to know more about North Head, please contact Judy Lambert on 9949 3521(ah) or email twsombat@optusnet.com.au



Katie with some of the children

Despite the rainy weather, the free nature walk for children on Sunday, 6th April was still a success! Fourteen children and nine adults braved the rain to arrive at Bandicoot Heaven. Due to the very heavy and relentless rain, the walk did not happen. However, the children still had a 'taste' of nature and were entertained inside with games, stories and hands on activities! Hopefully the weather will cooperate for the next nature walk on Sunday, 4th of May!

Next Walk for Children - Free

Katie Meyer will be doing a short walk with children on Sunday 4 May 2014. The walk will start from Bandicoot Heaven (Building 20) at 11am and last about an hour. For more information or to book, please email Katie at katiem73@hotmail.com

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. If you would like to receive a copy of our newsletter, or if you have a photo, taken at North Head that you would like to share, please email northhead@fastmail.fm

Native Plant Nursery

Volunteering at the Nursery is never boring. Help is always wanted as there is so much to do in maintaining our planted areas, planting out and growing the plants. If you would like to help us please email Jenny at northhead@fastmail.fm or turn up any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12 noon.

Amazing what you can see on North Head



Taken in the Third Cemetery on 9.4.14

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo enjoying a *Lambertia formosa* flower (Mountain Devil or Honey Flower). Black Cockatoos were last reported being seen on 20 April.

Phallus indusiatus



Or Crinoline Stinkhorn. It has a fetid odour to attract flies and other insects and is about 180 mm high. They were discovered on wood mulch.

A dose of millipedes

Peter Macinnis



I don't have interests, just long-lasting temporary obsessions, like bones and crawly things. Lately, I have seen lots of millipedes around North Head. Millipedes (above) have two pairs of legs per segment.



Centipedes have just one pair of legs per segment, and they are bad news.

Millipedes are stingless vegetarians, but I knew that millipedes secrete nasty chemicals. I thought the juice was mainly hydrogen cyanide, but a chance find the other day caused me to check. They actually secrete benzoquinones which are nasty, but not as deadly. So why did I check?

It was work. I was reading William Buchan's 1790 "Domestic Medicine". He gave "Peruvian bark", a source of quinine, for almost everything, but his recipe for chin-cough (alias whooping cough), caught my eye:

The millepedes (sic), or wood-lice, are greatly recommended for the cure of a chin-cough. Those who chuse to make use of these infects, may infuse two ounces of them bruised in a pint of small white-wine for one night. Afterwards the liquor may be strained through a cloth, and a table-spoonful of it given to the patient three or four times a-day. (p.287)

With temporary obsessions, nobody knows when you derail, so I was free to go chasing, especially as he said "*millepedes, or wood-lice*". We usually call wood-lice slaters and pill-bugs. They are very different from millipedes, and not considered dangerous.

In 1687, Hans Sloane helped treat that retired pirate and ex-Governor of Jamaica Henry Morgan, whose main problem was grog. Sloane and a colleague prescribed millipedes and oil of scorpions, and Morgan died. I suspected that the millipedes might have killed the old pirate, but Sir Francis Bacon, explained all in his 1625-ish *Philosophical Works*.

Millepedes or Woodlice, which roll themselves into Balls, are bred chiefly under Logs of Timber, but not in the Timber... So it was a case of mistaken identity that people called pill-bugs millipedes!



(left) a millipede and (right) a slater



a series of shots of "pill-bugs"

So there we have it: the unrelated animals are grouped because some of the isopod

crustaceans, the ones called pill-bugs, roll up to protect their bellies, and so do juliform diplopods—and echidnas.

Only taxonomy can save you from dosing yourself with echidnas!



Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

The Sydney Morning Herald 2 July 1906

"PNEUMONIC PLAGUE. - ANOTHER FATAL CASE. TWENTY-TWO CONTACTS IN QUARANTINE."

"Another case of pneumonic plague, which terminated fatally, was discovered on Saturday. The victim was Mrs. Miles, who resided at Palmer-street, Balmain. Mrs. Miles was on visiting terms with the Grose family, amongst whom the previous cases of plague of this character occurred. She was taken ill several days ago, suffering apparently from pneumonia. An examination of the expectoration made at the Board of Health laboratory did not reveal sufficient to enable the case to be determined as plague, but the conditions were so suspicious as to justify the immediate removal of Mrs Miles to the Quarantine Station at the North Head. The case proved eventually to be one of true plague, and the patient sank rapidly and died at 7.30 on Saturday night.

Five contacts were removed to the Quarantine Station in connection with Mrs. Miles's case, and yesterday six other persons, who were found to have been in communication with the house in which the disease has occurred, were sent to North Head. In all tho contacts now number 22. So far none of them have developed any sign of illness." (No one else died).

Henry Grose died on 24 June and his wife, Catherine Grose on 28 June 1906. After her death it was discovered that she had pneumonic plague. Her nine children and their two aunts, were removed to the Quarantine Station. Mrs Miles was an active member of St. John's Church, Balmain and had sat up all night with her friend, Mrs Grose. Mrs Miles contacts were her husband and four children the youngest Sydney was born in 1903.

Ten years on- The Sydney Morning Herald 30 June 1916 IN MEMORIAM.

"Sabina Rachel (Mary) Miles, who died at Quarantine Hospital, North Head June 30, 1906. Inserted by her loving children Alice, Jack, Sydney Miles, Sapper W.C. Miles (on active service)."