



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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Next meeting 20 May at 7pm

Speaker David Jenkins - Whale Spotter

Sydney is about to witness one of the greatest animal migrations on earth! Over 20,000 Humpback whales will travel thousands of kilometres from their summer feeding grounds, deep in the cold waters of the Southern Ocean to their breeding grounds in the warm, tropical waters of Queensland. Come and learn about this epic journey and the animals that make it with David Jenkins from Whale Spotter.

Education Room – Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20. Call in to have a look at our displays and our botanical card range with many new designs.

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

Getting to know North Head's plants



Thanks to the efforts of Judith and Peter Bennett, our little track-side signs identifying some of the more common plants on North Head have now been renewed. As you walk around the tracks you'll find little yellow signs, each with a common name, a Latin name and a photo of a plant that's very close by.

Native Plant Nursery

Over the summer the Nursery group has planted on the Oval, the Sergeants Mess, in and around the frog pond, the Scenic Drive and the old Gym. We are just about keeping pace with maintenance. The weather has been really good for all plants, so this means a lot of weeding and cutting back.

We have plenty of stock coming on ready for an autumn plant out. If you would like to join us just turn up any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12 noon or join us for morning tea about 10.30am. More details from Jenny at northhead@fastmail.com.au.

Congratulations.

Frances Bodkin, Nick Vale and Jenny Wilson received Manly Environment Centre Eco Award nominations this year for their work for the environment.

Bandicoots and plantings

Dr Jennifer Anson (AWC)



Oval

The Australian Wildlife Conservancy undertakes regular monitoring of the North Head Long-nosed Bandicoot population. Areas that have been revegetated by the Sanctuary Foundation Nursery volunteers were trapped for the first time recently, with very encouraging results. The area in front of the nursery and the fingerlings of plantings surrounding the oval are providing important understorey vegetation for the bandicoots. They are providing refuge sites for bandicoots to nest in, adjacent to the good foraging habitat of the grassy areas.

jennifer.anson@australianwildlife.org

Clean Up Australia: Clean Up North Head

Judy Lambert

The annual CleanUp Australia Day on Sunday 1 March saw 12 volunteers out collecting rubbish around the tracks and roadsides on North Head.

Site coordinators Judy and Geoff Lambert were delighted when 12 people (rather than just the three who registered) came to clean up. Almost all the tracks around the Trust site, including North Fort and the bush below the Bella Vista lookout were cleared of rubbish.

A big thanks goes to Brenda & Brenda, Glenn & Veronica, Andrea, Peter & Christine, Kylie, Ken and Julie, who all contributed to the collection of five tightly packed bags of rubbish and another five bags of recyclables. Thanks also to Trust Ranger Tony and NPWS Ranger Chris for assisting with disposal of the stuff collected.



Brenda Lynsky & Brenda Foggo receive appreciation certificates

About spider webs

Peter Macinnis

When I was younger, I ran with my children in the early morning, on the rough trails around Dobroyd Head. I used to lead, and often collected a face full of spider web from orb weaver and St Andrew's Cross spider webs that spread across the track.



I quite like spiders, and I have done, ever since I saw the facial resemblance between my Latin teacher and a salticid or jumping

spider like this one. Still, an early-morning face-full of web was a wake-up. I tried sending the children ahead, but they were shorter than me, and went under the web, leaving it standing.

Now I am older, and walk along trails. I still get the occasional face full of web, but I never dismiss web as useless, because two of my temporary obsessions are quack remedies and the winning of gold.

There was a real Dr Muffet (the father of a Miss Muffet) who proposed giving people "a spider hidden inside a raisin" as a cure for malaria. John Wesley, better known as a churchman, recommended spider web to cure the same thing, though he called it ague:

Or make six middling Pills of Cobwebs. Take one a little before the cold Fit, two a little before the next Fit, (suppose the next day,) the other three, if need be, a little before the third Fit. This seldom fails.

— John Wesley, *Primitive Physic*, 1785, 22.

Elias Ashmole used spiders for ague in 1681, writing in his diary: — "I took, early in the morning, a good dose of elixir, and hung three spiders about my neck, and they drove my ague away — *Deo gratias* [thanks to God]."

Between 1576 and 1578, there was a fraudulent gold mine near Hudson's Bay,

based on salted samples and a report of spiders on Kodlunarn Island.

Martin Frobisher claimed that spiders were "... signs of great store of gold". This puzzled me, but Lynne Kelly, a friend who is the author of an excellent book on Australian spiders, explained it.

She said: "Golden orb weavers (*Nephila spp.*) are all over the world ... and their webs shine

gold in the sun—like very finely spun gold thread. I suspect this spider is the link to the myth."

Next time you run into a web, remember: there may be gold at the end of that web: either real gold (improbable) or a cure that you can get the gullible to shell out for (highly probable).



Pittosporum revolutum



Or Rough-fruit Pittosporum is a shrub to 3 metres tall with broad alternate leaves. The fruit is an orange warty capsule which splits to reveal a mass of red sticky seeds which attract birds and insects.

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

James McNAIR, aged 23 who died of smallpox on 13.12.1881, was the fourth person to be buried in the Third Cemetery.

Australian Town and Country Journal (Sydney, NSW: 1870 - 1907) Saturday 17 December 1881

"James McNair, who was acting as a special constable in guarding infected houses, died on Monday night about 12 o'clock of small-pox. He became ill about a fortnight ago, and was taken to the quarantine ground, where he died."

Mrs Alice FORSHAW, aged 25 died of smallpox on 17.1.1882 and her baby, Adelaide FORSHAW aged 8 days died on 19.1.1882 were the fifth and sixth burials.

Evening News (Sydney, NSW: 1869-1931) Thursday 16 February 1882

Detention in Quarantine.

"Mr. John Forshaw, of Newtown, writes us under date of yesterday as follows: — 'My brother Henry Forshaw, with wife and child, arrived by Orient steamer *Garonne*, on the 12th January last, and they were placed in quarantine on North Head. Sad, to relate his wife died on 17th ult. and his child two days later. As my brother has never been afflicted with any disease that I know of, I cannot understand why he is detained a week over the time limited for detention on the healthy ground. To-day I received the following telegram, which speaks for itself: 'Telegram from Quarantine Station. Both well, cannot say when we will be released, 27 days on the healthy ground. Send me news from home.' Perhaps the publication of this letter may lead to some inquiry, and his immediate release from quarantine.'"