



North Head Sanctuary Foundation

Custodians of North Head

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Happy New Year

Next Meeting Wed 1 March 2017, 7pm

at Bandicoot Heaven. We hope to have some residents of North Head, talk about their early life at North Head School of Artillery. Everyone welcome.

Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

Our community education room is open 10am to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays in Building 20.

We'd welcome some new volunteers to help staff Bandicoot Heaven. If interested, please contact Judy Lambert at twsombat@optusnet.com.au

North Head Sanctuary: Always happy to share with new visitors --- -Judy & Geoff Lambert

During the past few months, we've been happy to host/guide visitor groups wanting to learn more about North Head. In addition to our usual guided spring wildflower walks, five very different groups came on guided walks between October and December 2016. Each had their own different reasons for wanting to do a guided walk on North Head, and each seemed to appreciate the time spent there.

On 12 October 16 members of the Sydney Women's International Club's walking group did a spring wildflower walk. 2 November saw two ESBS managers from Bicentennial Park and Mt Annan Gardens come to share their science and management strategies with us. On 3 November, almost 100 Year 9 students from Balgowlah Boys High School (along with their science teachers) spent a hot and tiring day getting to know about both the Sanctuary and Sydney Water's Waste Treatment Plant (not sure that they enjoyed the visit as much the other groups). On 24 November 16 carers from Kirribilli Community Centre and Chatswood came along for a shorter version of our wildflower walk and finally, on another very hot day, about 80 English as a Second Language (ESL) science students from Macquarie Uni and some of their course coordinators spent a morning with us.

Although it is a challenge working with big groups we managed, with split groups and assistance from group leaders, to provide a reasonable introduction to North Head's environment in ways that seemed to meet their needs.



Native Plant Nursery



Echidna in planted area opposite Nursery. Photo Peter Macinnis

Back in 2008 the area opposite Building 20 was lawn and over time has been replanted and maintained (including weed removal), by the Nursery group. All planting by our volunteers has come from stock grown from seed and cuttings on site.



We also started planting the area behind the childcare centre and the Crossfit gym on 3rd January 2017. This area will be in addition to other areas.

We are lucky to have a great band of volunteers.

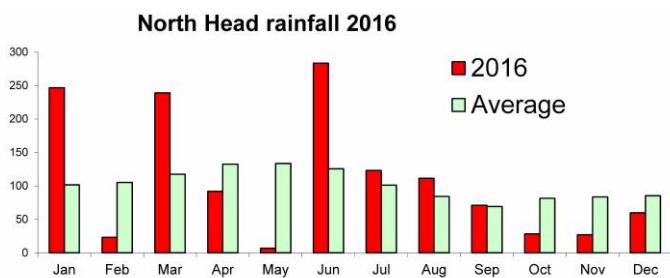
Thank you

If you would like to join us any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and 12noon, planting, removing weeds and doing maintenance, just turn up or email:

northhead@fastmail.com.au.

An average year? NOT?

Geoff Lambert



Overall, the 2016 calendar year produced an insignificantly higher than average rainfall of 1311mm (the average is 1221mm). The year, however, was rather Biblical, with 3 very fat months and 3 very lean months. The amount of rain in those three fat months was nearly 14 times that in the three lean months. A “variance ratio test” suggest that we could expect such a variable year about one in every thousand.

Down at the Hanging Swamp, the first port of call each day for the SHFT rangers, the variability was not so apparent. This is because the 3 fat months kept the swamp on a continuous drip-feed out of the spongy sand. It only finally dried out in early December. The frogs, however, are still there, hanging out in the Hanging Swamp for the rain that most surely will come — won't it?

Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

From *Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative* 23 January 1919.

“TWO DEATHS AT NORTH HEAD.”

“Two deaths took place at the North Head quarantine station yesterday. The first victim was Mon Yik, a Chinaman, who came to Sydney in an influenza infected steamer, and had the trouble badly. He recovered from influenza, but developed rapid consumption, to which he succumbed. The other death was that of P. Peras, an Italian military reservist, from the Medic. He also developed consumption”.



Mon Yik had come to Australia on the Manuka and had been in quarantine since 16 November 1918. He was one of the thirty-two cases of two hundred people aboard the Manuka. He was buried in Quarantine Cemetery 22 Jan 19. His remains were exhumed for transportation to China on 10 September 1929.

Making crystals, the unusual way

Peter Macinnis

During the past few months, I have been working on a young people's book for the National Library, called *Australian Backyard Earth Scientist*. This is the third I have done in a series, and as I was running out of ideas for the newsletter, I thought I would throw in a few of the activities I wrote for my readers.

Why use it here? Well, I gather there are a lot of people of grandparentish age reading the newsletter, and they are always looking for things to show youngsters, and my own students at Manly Vale Public School liked this method of growing crystals.

You need a pack of mothballs from the supermarket, a clean jar with a tight lid, a place to leave the jar, and two weeks or so.

Put the mothballs in the jar, tighten the lid, and leave it in a safe sunny place, away from wind, pets and stray animals including younger children.



Left to right: The jar on Day 1, end of Day 1, Day 5 and Day 11.

Naphthalene is flammable when heated, but in a sealed container like this, it is safe enough. The solid naphthalene sublimates, which means it changes to a vapour without melting, and later, it condenses on a cooler part of the jar, away from the sunlight. You will see results after the first day, but nice crystals take as much as a month. This exercise works well on a north-facing window-sill, but mine was just left on a north-facing deck, and it worked just fine.

By the way, I also used an identical jar to make water crystals, but that can wait until next month. Then I'll turn to trying to suffocate plants (that's what a neighbour's kid called it.)

Please note Peter consulted several MSDS sheets for naphthalene before writing this. Unlike sources like Wikipedia, MSDS sheets are reliable. As indicated, naphthalene is a household poison. **The lid should stay on the jar, and people should neither smell, taste nor eat the crystals.**