



# North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc

## Custodians of North Head

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### Next Meeting Saturday 18 March 2023

at Bandicoot Heaven at 2pm.

There will be a Special General Meeting at 2pm to vote on accepting a new constitution, so we are up to date.

Then there will be the talk followed by afternoon tea.

Everyone welcome.

Our speaker will be John Dengate. His talk;

“Going wild on the northern beaches.”

John has lived on the northern beaches for 40 years and has an intimate knowledge of the wildlife here. He will reveal which local creature breeds 3000km away in the coral sea, which one has a private life that would make the desperate housewives blush, and which one travels about 30,000km just to breed here. And if you ever wondered what local critter deserves the title of 'nature's warhead' this will be your chance to find out!

John will be happy to answer questions. He says he doesn't know all that much, but that he will come up with something convincing!

### Education Room - Bandicoot Heaven

We are open on **Saturdays and Sundays between 10am and 4pm**. Please call in and have a chat.

We are keen to recruit volunteers interested in helping visitors better to get to know North Head and all its treasures. Anyone interested should contact Judy Lambert (email: [twsombat@iinet.net.au](mailto:twsombat@iinet.net.au) or phone 0427 217 580).

### Native Plant Nursery

The Nursery grows mainly Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub plants for planting by our volunteers into degraded areas of North Head. You are welcome to join us, there is always planting, weeding and maintenance to be done. In fact, there is much weeding to be done due to the current weather conditions.

Please call in any Tuesday or Friday morning between 8am and noon when we are open, or email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au) if you would like to join us.

### Bandicoot Heaven & Native Plant Nursery:

To become a volunteer, you must be a member of North Head Sanctuary Foundation and be **COVID** vaccinated.

To download a membership form

<https://www.northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au/join/20190629%20NHSF%20membership%20form.pdf>

### Thank you, Max



We have received a \$10,000 donation from former QS lessee Max Player to be direct to our conservation work on North Head. The donation is appreciated.

Photo shows our president Matthew Taylor with Max Player and Jenny Wilson

### Opening of the Stage 1 improvements at North Head on Saturday 18 February 2023



James Griffin MP opened stage one of the works and then there was a walk around to see the progress of the new lookouts. These should be open in April.



## 'On the Edge: Species at Risk' Judy Lambert

Between 18 March and 2 April the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney art exhibition in Lion Gate Lodge will highlight Australian flora, fauna and habitats that are threatened with extinction. The artworks will showcase a diversity of endangered and vulnerable Australian species and ecological communities using a variety artistic media. Artist Jane Guthleben's work will be of particular interest to North Head members and supporters. Jane who paid us a visit to assist in preparing the statement supporting her work, which is featuring Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub species. Open each day between 10am and 4pm, entry to 'On the Brink' is free and art works will be for sale.

## A Liking for Lichens Peter Macinnis

In *The Ginger Man*, Sebastian Dangerfield has an idle thought, as he passes the Botany Department, that *it must be nice growing plants for a degree*, and this inspired me. "I plan," I told Christine, "to do a Master's in lichen taxonomy, since most lichens grow in the wilderness. I can go bushwalking for a degree!"



In the end, I dropped it, because the chemicals you use are either toxic or carcinogenic, or both. Still, I watch lichens, because they are neat, looking a bit like scabs on almost any surface that lasts: rocks, timber, trees, bricks and tiles among them.

We call them symbiotic, because each lichen is made of three organisms, two fungi and an alga. Until 2016, people thought it was just one fungus and one alga, but only specialists need to worry about this change in the details. Lichens are first-arrival life, colonising places where

neither an alga nor a fungus could live by itself. If they are symbiotic, the alga makes food for them both and the fungi hold water to keep the alga alive, but some scientists think the relationship is more complicated, calling it helotism, from a Greek word for 'slave', *helot*. In that version, the alga is a prisoner or slave of the fungus (or fungi), and people who favour this idea say that lichens are just fungi that have discovered agriculture.

There are three types of lichens: (1) crustose lichens that form a flat crust on rocks, roof tiles, and sometimes tree barks, (2) foliose lichens which look more leafy, but which grow on rocks and some trees, and (3) fruticose lichens, which grow mainly on soil and a few tree trunks.

I am lichen-aware, but as I was planning my book, *The Nature of North Head*, I could recall no lichens on North Head, and Jenny and Toni could recall none, either, but found them, all over the place: we hadn't looked hard enough.

There is also a foliose one that grows only on tar. This picture is from Picton (NZ), but it is also in the nursery area, if you look.

The rock below is down near the Scenic Drive "frog pond", and it has all three types, as marked.

(Note: an Australian 50 cent coin is 32 mm across.)

