

THE Rosedale ASSOCIATION INC



Newsletter Issue 138 December 2024



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR MARGOT MARSHALL

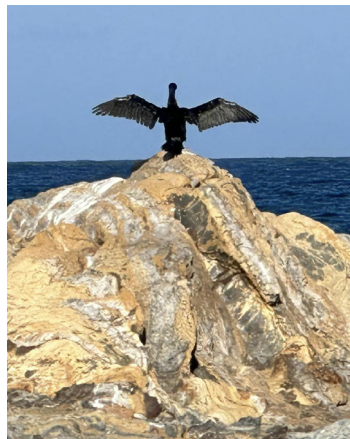
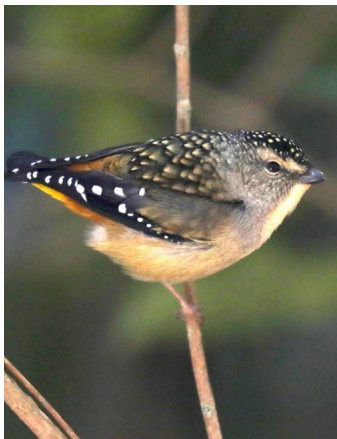
Five years since our devastating New Year's Eve fire, we've had another twelve months of rebuilding, especially in North Rosedale, where we wait for landscaping and bush regeneration to soften the landscape. Fires in Victoria and WA sent a chill though us - make sure you read Michael Skipper's fire report on page 3. Let's do our best for a fire-free summer.

Living surrounded by bush brings curious incidents. Bush rats are making their presence felt up and down the coast and at least one Rosedale family has found bush rats have chewed through wires and hoses in their cars. A bush rat was also discovered cosily living in the wheel hub of their

son's car. They're spraying the engines with peppermint oil - but will it work? Does anyone have any solutions? Another neighbour entered her house to find a red bellied black snake making itself at home on her sewing table! Many thanks to WIRES, who answered her call for help very promptly.

At the Easter AGM we bade a sad farewell to Vicki Smith, who'd served the Rosedale Association as Secretary for more than a decade, and welcomed James Blogg to take over. [See the minutes](#) on our website and some images of the year in Rosedale on page 5.

Happy Christmas!



ROSEDALE ASSOCIATION CURRENT COMMITTEE

committee@rosedale.org.au

President

David Boardman

Secretary

James Blogg

Treasurer

Melissa Gribble

Members

Sally Edsall

Rory Eames

Margot Marshall

Annie Nadin

Michael Skipper

Peter Ward

MEMBERSHIP

Please pass this newsletter on to your friends and neighbours – especially new post-fire residents! We'd be delighted to have new members. Apply for new membership on our website [here](https://www.aussiebb.com.au) and pay by credit card. It's still only \$10 a year.

Existing members, your fees are due now. Pay online [here](https://www.aussiebb.com.au). If you're not sure whether your subscription is up to date, please email peteward@aussiebb.com.au.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DAVID BOARDMAN

I spent the winter months away from Rosedale, returning in mid October to longer days, warmer weather and the daily spectacle of whales performing inside Jimmies Island. Despite all the development, as I look out the beach is deserted of people but the stragglers on the whale migration are heading south. The death toll from the shearwater migration seems unusually high – see story on page 5.

As the developments around us accelerate, the speed limits are heading down - 60 kms from Rosedale to Malua Bay and 80 kms if you're heading south.

House construction in West Rosedale is well underway. Elements developer, Walker Corporation, have submitted their revised master plan. I had a zoom meeting with them in November, together with several members of the committee, and we agreed that the new plan is an improvement on the 2008 Concept Plan. The development will still be 792 lots, (51 already completed) but the layout appears more environmentally friendly. The developed area is reduced by 13 hectares and managed vegetation increased by nine hectares. We have several issues we'd like to discuss with Council, who are proving very difficult to contact at the moment! To learn more and compare plans, visit our website [here](https://www.aussiebb.com.au) for the Walker presentation to us.

Since Easter, we've had two onslaughts on invasive weeds in the gully and Tranquil Bay headland (funded by residents and the Association and matched by Council). Contractors have been spraying and cutting back and the spraying is now extending to private land (with owners' permission). Results so far are promising. It's great to see the community involvement – thanks to those who have attacked cassia and Illawarra flame trees on their own land and a special thank you to Sue Davenport for getting this project started.



I'm afraid there's no action on track upgrades. In April Brian Joyce and I walked the tracks with Council's new Director of Infrastructure Graham Attenborough to develop a plan, with the priority being the Yowani Road beach access track. I will continue to besiege Council with phone calls and hopefully we will see some results in the new year.

Finally, our congratulations to Rosedale resident Sharon Winslade on her election to Council in September's elections. Only four of the nine sitting councillors stood for re-election, with Matthew Hatcher returned as Mayor.



As we get closer to the fifth anniversary of one of the worst fire periods in memory, I see a level of apathy and indifference creeping into Rosedale and surrounds.

I'm worried about the lack of preparedness for the bushfire season and the buildup of fire fuels on some blocks. This heightens the risk from the growth of mid-level vegetation in the scrub and forest around us, with more growth after the recent rains.

Bushfire experts warn that the landscape is well primed for fire after a dry winter and spring. While their forecast is for increased rain in December and possible above average rainfall over summer, they also predict higher than average temperatures. They're calling on us to plan as if the rain won't come. Catastrophic fire, they add, can still occur during normal bushfire seasons.

So we all need to reduce the fuel on our blocks to moderate the risk of fire destroying our homes – and our neighbours' properties.

Over the last few months, the Malua Bay and Broulee RFS have already put out a couple of small fires. It doesn't take much to start a fire and with our regular windy conditions, there's always a chance we'll see fires again in Rosedale.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCIES: 000

ABC LOCAL RADIO: 103.5 FM

WIRES (animal rescue)

13000 WIRES or 1300 094737

ESSENTIAL ENERGY 13 20 80

FISHERIES WATCH HOTLINE (poachers)

1800 043 536

SEWERAGE (Council): 02 4474 7347

NSW MENTAL HEALTH LINE 1800 011 511

EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE HOTLINE

1800 675 8882

I urge everyone to either update your fire plan or make a new plan. We need to be better prepared than we were on New Year's Eve 2019.

It doesn't take long to write a plan. Make sure you discuss it with your family so everyone knows what you will do before fire approaches. Please look at the [RFS website](#) for help in writing your plan. There is no doubt the safest decision is to LEAVE EARLY if a fire is coming.

If you plan to stay, please make absolutely sure you are mentally and physically able to fight a fire and that you are able to fulfil ALL the [STAY AND DEFEND CHECKLIST](#) on our website.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM 2019 NEW YEARS EVE FIRE

- Where owners had cleared yards, roofs and under decks, homes fared better. Even raking back leaves a few metres from the dwelling helped and houses with larger cleared areas and lawn were more defensible.
- We were very lucky to have mains water pressure during the entire ordeal – but many garden hoses were not long enough, had no sprayer fittings or were invisible. Where hoses were at the ready, we were able to extinguish spot fires, embers and hot spots.
- We had no definitive list of SWS (Static Water Storages) and fire pumps - this would have helped in the immediate aftermath of the fire front.
- It is vital to make and stick to a fire plan – and leave early. Too many people made decisions late on the run on what they were to do or which location to evacuate to.
- The beach has always been classed as a 'place of last resort'. Many did evacuate to the beach. I am convinced that if the westerly wind had blown another half hour on that fateful morning, the result would have been very different and possibly fatal. The temperature undoubtedly would have been much higher and it is highly likely that the air would have been unbreathable due to less oxygen and increased smoke.
- Stay and Defend should only be attempted by those who have the knowledge, skills and (importantly) fire shelters capable of withstanding the intense heat and smoke. There are very few addresses in our hamlet that have this facility. Early evacuation is the best option, returning only if physically and mentally fit after the immediate threat has passed.





BEACH SAFETY REMINDERS

Many people die from heart attack after being caught in a rip. Our defibrillator and rescue tube are located on the wall between 13 and 17 Knowlman Road – learn how to use it.

Angel rings are located at the south end of the main beach and either end of Boatshed beach.

If you see someone in trouble, phone 000 and ask for 'Police' – it's the fastest way for a coordinated emergency rescue. Do not enter the water without a flotation device when you see someone in trouble, even if you're a skilled swimmer.

ULTIMATE PREDATOR VISITS ROSEDALE PETER WARD



C Australian Museum



Eden Old Tom display

We've seen plenty of whales over winter, predominantly humpbacks on their annual calving migration between Antarctica and the Coral Sea. But residents were intrigued to see rare visitors – orcas hunting fish schools off Rosedale Beach.

Orcas, also known as killer whales, are apex predators of the open ocean. They are not actually whales, but members of the dolphin family, readily distinguished from whales and other dolphins by their striking black and white colour. Growing up to 10 metres and 10 tonnes, adult orcas dwarf even the largest great white sharks and live up to 90 years.

They prey on a variety of marine animals: fish, sharks (including great whites), marine turtles, seabirds, seals, sea lions and other cetaceans, including sick or injured

whales and whale calves. They're not known to attack humans in the wild, although there are several cases of captive orcas turning on their trainers.

Orcas have excellent hearing and eyesight in and out of water. In addition to being incredibly fast (top speed of 30 knots almost 60 km per hour!), they navigate the oceans in migrations of 10,000 km or more. They are highly intelligent, using echo-location when herding prey in coordinated packs and communicating with pod members through their own unique languages.

When commercial whaling occurred off south-eastern Australia in the 19th and 20th centuries, orcas were known to help fishers by herding whales in return for choice cuts of whale meat, such as the tongue. The Eden Killer Whale Museum displays the skeleton of a famous orca ('Old Tom'), renowned for leading his pod to support human whalers. The orca has age-old spiritual significance to many Indigenous coastal communities and in Eden, the whalers mostly employed local Indigenous fishermen.



SHEARWATER DEATHS ON ROSEDALE BEACH

Visitors and residents were shocked and saddened in late spring at the harrowing sight of dozens of dead shearwaters – otherwise known as mutton birds - along Rosedale beach.

These seabird 'wrecks' – or mass mortalities occur as a result of their long migration, starvation and exhaustion, exacerbated by severe weather conditions. Severe winds had also littered the beach with bluebottles at the time.

Muttonbird fatalities have become more frequent over the last ten years and at a larger scale. Scientists say climate change and higher ocean temperatures are impacting their food supply.

There has so far been no sign the birds are carrying the deadly H5N1 strain of avian flu but people are warned not to touch the dead birds and to report any wild birds you suspect may be diseased to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 8882.



SEASONAL ALGAL BLOOMS ON SALTWATER CREEK – ARE THEY A BAD THING? JAMES BLOGG



Those of us who live along the creek (or are more observant when crossing the footbridge) may have noticed algae growing along the shore in larger quantities as the water level drops.

Is the algae going to take over the creek? How bad is this for the creek’s health?

Changes across the highway appear to be having some impact on water flows but algae are always present in the creek. The onset of warmer temperatures and contaminants such as fertilizers and sewerage can lead to the formation of a harmful algal bloom which is when toxin-producing algae grow excessively in a body of water and become visible on the surface.

Blooms can be green, blue-green, red, or brown, depending on the type of algae - and with climate change we can

expect them to be more common. However, some varieties don’t produce harmful toxins – for example the species of brown algae, sargassum, provides a habitat for marine life. You can watch ducks swimming amongst algae, foraging for food and even nibbling on the blooms, breaking them up.

Blooms block the sunlight from reaching organisms living deeper in the receding creek water. If blooms spread across the creek’s surface, they can deplete oxygen in the water and can eventually lead to the death of marine life.

And our health?

Algae produce toxins which can have a range of health effects on people causing nausea and vomiting or even liver failure. These effects can be more severe in children and the elderly.

So, what should we do?

- Avoid swimming in the creek when algal blooms are significantly present
- Avoid eating any seafood if it comes from the creek when blooms are present – even if it is cooked
- Avoid letting any fertilizers from your garden run off into the creek - sewerage shouldn’t be such a problem these days, provided all our systems are running smoothly
- Consider raking up massed blooms at the edge of the creek in situations when they threaten to completely cover the entire water surface
- Volunteer to help us study the creek and better understand conditions which lead to algal blooms.

SALTWATER CREEK WATER MONITORING RORY EAMES

For the last few months very little rain has filled the catchment to allow Saltwater Creek to open to the ocean – hence the low water levels and algae. Low rainfall is a mixed blessing: lower water levels create a more stagnant, algal-prone creek which can lead to lower dissolved oxygen levels but on the bright side there’s been no runoff from roads and construction sites for some time.

Our monitoring results show just minor changes in some indicators, reflecting changes in the catchment. For example, available phosphate marginally increased from

March, and dissolved oxygen is reducing, consistent with the low water levels and the time since a significant rainfall. Ph (acidity/alkalinity) is stable and the reduced electrical conductivity (an indicator of the creek’s ‘saltiness’) reflects the time since the creek last opened to the ocean.

These indicators will be the key ones to monitor during the early summer rains (if they happen) as we may see a spike in phosphate.

	February 2024	March 2024	July 2024
Temperature °C	25.5	25.5	25.5
Available Phosphate	0	0.01	0.02
Dissolved Oxygen mg/L	4.4	3.3	3.0
pH pH units	7.25	27.55	7.17
Electrical Conductivity µs/cm	1099	852	928

PROTECTING OUR SAND DUNES DI CLARK

I'm pleased to report that this year nature has been doing its thing and the bare earth that was exposed from the fires has mostly been covered up with grasses and local plants. This reduces the amount of weed seed able to germinate - but there is still a pool of seed waiting to emerge. That's why our regular weeding sessions are so important. It's far better to remove a seedling prior to weed dispersal than having to come back next time for a big new crop.

ROSEDALE WEEDING SESSIONS

When: 2nd Saturday of the month

Time: 3.00 pm or 4 pm (depending on season)

Where: Meet at the main carpark.

Contact: Di Clark 0402 555 330

Join the email notification list:
executive @rosedale.org.au

The weeds that we targeted this year were fleabane, bridal creeper, marram grass and the odd thistle. We also discovered a few plants of sea spurge settling in at Nunn's beach. These plants have a toxic latex sap, so wear gloves and eye protection when you remove them.

It is the regular walkers and observant nature lovers who notice changes in our environment. If you ever notice any plants that appear new to the area and you suspect that they may be a potential weed problem, please either contact the Rosedale Association or contact me directly.

The Eurobodalla Shire also has a large amount of information about weeds on its website.

Think about joining us for a weeding session. It is only an hour and a chance to meet other locals and learn more about our wonderful environment. Thank you to everyone who has supported the Dune care activities during the year.



THE GULLY AND TRANQUIL BAY HEADLAND



In November Sue Davenport and Emma Patyus organised council contractors to spray, paint and cutback invasive species on crown land around the gully and Tranquil Bay headland. This time the sweep extended to some private blocks fronting the gully and headland – with landowners' permission.

For Sue the days were blighted when she came across a backhoe clearing five private blocks in the gully. Investigations are ongoing.

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The Rosedale Association Inc.
PO Box 2125
MALUA BAY NSW 2536

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