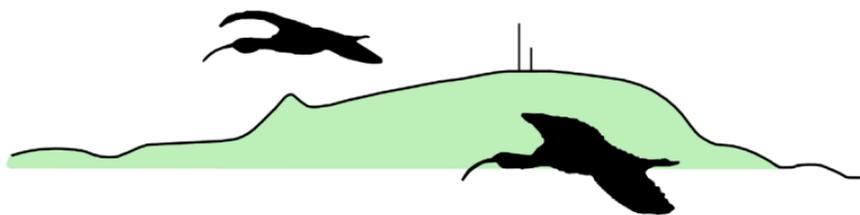


Orange Field Naturalist and Conservation Society Inc.



**Orange Field Naturalist and
Conservation Society (OFNCS) aims to**

- foster **interest in and enjoyment of all aspects of natural history** by means of field studies and excursions, informative presentations at monthly meetings and through newsletters and our website;
- encourage **participation in the conservation of the environment** for the benefit of the people of Orange now and into the future through representations to the media and all levels of government on issues of both local and wider significance.

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History of the Society

The inaugural meeting of the Orange Field Naturalist and Conservation Society, called by Chris Pratten, was held on 23 October 1974. Chris led the Society for the next ten years. His energy in those early years is reflected in the legacy we enjoy today in our local parks and reserves and through gazettal of Nangar, Conimbla and Goobang National Parks. Other Crown Lands were also preserved and protected. Chris has since been awarded a Centenary Medal for services to the community (2001), an O.A.M. (2005) and Honorary Life membership of OFNCS (2017) for his commitment to conservation.

“Pressure the authorities to keep preservation of the environment at the forefront of the political agenda. Without groups like ours making a noise, self-interest and the power of the dollar will take over” was his advice.

The current President, Geoff Selwood, and the members have carried on this same tradition. OFNCS maintains strong links with Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange, Central West Environment Council and the local National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Education and Excursions

The activities of OFNCS promote learning about nature, the environment and conservation.

Monthly talks explore topics such as plants and plant communities (ranging from trees to orchids and fungi), animals and their habitats (including birds, mammals, insects, reptiles, amphibians and fish) as well as geology (including mines, fossils and caves). Members have also shared their experiences of the natural history of places they have visited within Australia and overseas. Environmental issues, such as the conservation of native landscapes, inappropriate development or contentious legislative changes, are also discussed.

Excursions to local areas of interest are often matched to the topic of the talk. They have involved surveying and workshops or activities initiated by other groups, such as Landcare. The monthly newsletter and website keep members up to date.

The Society welcomes new members of any age and background. No natural history experience is needed and you can learn a lot by joining in.

Conservation and Restoration

“Assisting in the conservation of the environment for the benefit of the people of Orange now and into the future.”

Since its inception the Society has played a significant role in highlighting activities that threaten environmentally sensitive areas and in the creation and preservation of local and regional parks and reserves. It also advocates for the protection of threatened species.

OFNCS has called for the preservation of Crown Lands and is a strong voice promoting their environmental values. The Society campaigns on national issues such as mining, fauna protection, waste, water, forestry, land management and climate change.

Local urban and rural issues continue to be a major focus. OFNCS is actively involved in issues such as urban planning, vegetation, biodiversity, wetlands and water management.

OFNCS continues to be actively involved in restoration projects associated with all of the above issues. Examples are post fire restoration on Mount Canobolas and the erection of bird nest boxes in Black Sallee Reserve.

Monitoring and Research

Society members, including scientists and amateur naturalists, have been busy over the years gathering data and undertaking research related to conservation. Projects have included the following:

Flora and fauna surveys: recording the biodiversity through observation and live trapping. Sites have included Cadia, South Mullion, Mount Canobolas and local agricultural areas. Partners have included the NSW National Parks Association and other Field Naturalist Societies.

Spring Creek Reservoir bird count: conducting regular bird surveys on this reservoir since 1994. These help to assess the value of the reservoir to waterbirds, especially in drought, and, since 2008, to evaluate the effects of rowing on the reservoir.

Streamwatch: assessing the quality of Summer Hill Creek, by measuring the diversity of macro-invertebrates in the stream.

Rare species: monitoring rare and threatened species and their fate when subject to disturbance such as fire. An example is *Acacia meiantha* (a very beautiful, but rare local wattle).