



# North Head Sanctuary Foundation Inc

## Custodians of North Head

ABN 97093480659 P.O. Box 896, Balgowlah, NSW 2093

[northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au](http://northheadsanctuaryfoundation.org.au)

email [northhead@fastmail.com.au](mailto:northhead@fastmail.com.au)

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### General Meeting – Sat 19 March 2022 2pm

at Bandicoot Heaven, Building 20.

The Guest Speaker at NHSF's March General Meeting will be John Faulkner – former Minister of Defence, with responsibility for North Head and other military sites around Sydney Harbour. John will speak to us of his brainchild, the **Bondi to Manly Walk** – his motivation for



creating it, the enormous amount of work and inter-agency coordination to bring it to reality and the story behind the logo created for it. Everyone welcome.

### Education Room

#### - Bandicoot Heaven Re-opening

As the incidence of COVID-19 gradually decreases, we are pleased to announce that we are re-opening our community information room on **Saturdays and Sundays between 10am and 4pm from 5 March**. We'll resume our normal activities under a COVID-safe protocol (masks preferred indoors, volunteers vaccinated, QR code or log-sheet sign-in etc.). We look forward to your visits.

Some of our volunteers are no longer available after such a long break and we are keen to gain some new recruits.

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

### Native Plant Nursery

We grow Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub plants at our Nursery for planting into degraded areas of North Head. If you would like to join us, 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)

**Plants with changing names** Judy Lambert  
With about 500 different species on North head, it is quite a challenge to learn and remember their names.

#### Common names

Common names are perhaps easier to remember than the official scientific names derived from Latin, but they are not always a great help. Too often a plant will have a different common name depending on where it grows. For instance, the invasive weed '**Paterson's Curse**' is a major problem both when it invades natural areas, and to farmers as it takes over their grazing land.

Toxic to livestock that graze on it, Paterson's Curse causes liver damage in several species, especially horses.

However, in South Australia it is commonly known as **Salvation Jane** and has also been called **Riverina Bluebell** in southern New South Wales where it grows prolifically after summer and autumn rain. When given its scientific name (*Echium plantagenium*) there is no confusion about what it is.

#### Latin names

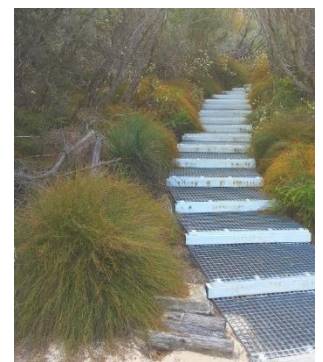
Since the 1700s, scientists have adopted a system of plant naming developed by Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus, in which each species has a two-part name, the first defining which genus the plant belongs to and the second its species. This system clearly identifies the relatives of a particular species – rather like we have a Family name and a Given name. To ensure consistency of naming across the world, these 'binomial' names are adopted after approval by the International Code of Nomenclature. This system has served us well for more than 200 years. As the technology for identifying a plant's 'pedigree' improves (e.g. through the use of DNA analysis and electron microscopy) plants are more commonly reclassified than in the past – each reclassification resulting in a globally accepted name change.

Two examples of such name changes relevant to our work on North Head are *Ficinia nodosa* and *Chordifex dimorphus*.

Our Nursery volunteers have been growing quite a lot of *Ficinia nodosa* (previously known as *Isolepis nodosa* or its common name Knobby Club-rush) for planting out in the area being upgraded by NPWS opposite North Fort.



We've also been monitoring *Chordifex dimorphus* (variously known in the past as *Restio dimorphus*, or, for a short time – but not officially adopted by the International Code of Nomenclature – *Guringalia dimorpha*, then *Baloskion dimorphum*.)



This clumping rush, with the common name Tassel Rush, is very characteristic of Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub on North Head. However, it is very fire sensitive and is generally not found for 20-30 years after a fire. Photos - *Ficinia nodosa* in Nursery and *Chordifex dimorphus* in unburnt ESBS, taken by Geoff Lambert.

## Rain

Peter Macinnis

As a boy, I splashed bare-foot in rain, with C. J. Dennis' *Song of Rain* running through my mind. *Patter, patter ... Boolcoolatta/ Adelaide and Oodnadatta... I like rain.*



On Tuesday (22/2/22), we volunteers descended on the new frog habitat near the Gunners Road car park, to move sandstone into place to shelter frogs. Dry like this, the habitat doesn't look like much, but rocks and plants are what frogs need most of all.

Contrary to what you see in picture books, frogs don't live in water, and they can even drown. They enter water to mate, and their tadpoles live in water, but frogs are land animals that swim.

So we don't make frog ponds, we make frog habitats, with plants and rocks to give shelter and places to get in and out. The bed of the 'pond' was dry, because it was dug into an old shale dump, but in time, clay-rich water will seep into the ground and clog the sandy, rocky soil. That's a work in progress, like the planting.



By noon on Tuesday, it was chucking it down, as we scientists say when in genteel company. Buckets and torrents hit the hills, filling the gullies, gaps and rills, oozing and creeping down and filling the habitat's dug-out base. Notice the nice muddy water, carrying those vital clay particles.



On Friday 25/2/22, at 14:00, the habitat was full and running over, and the frogs were shouting their approval: green and brown marsh frogs that go POCK!, Eastern

froglets that go *giddy-giddy*, and Sydney red-crowned toadlets that make a noise like a squashed rat. No, don't ask how I have that reference point. I just do.



Christine and I consulted the radar and scooted along to the now-open hanging swamp track, mainly to visit our friends the sundews. They are doing well, as are the same three species of frogs, all positively bellowing. I have had reports of ducks on the swamp, but didn't see any, and I don't know if the resident python(s) is/are back or not.



On the way out, we went around past the St Barbara's lawn, often a happy spot for echidnas. No luck, but the *other* frog habitat was looking well:



You know, I like rain. Take it away, Mr. Dennis!  
*Rolls the thunder at Eudunda;  
Leongatha, Boort, Kapunda  
Send a joyous message down,  
Sorrows, flooded, sink and drown.*

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You can find C. J. Dennis' *Song of Rain* on the web, or in Peter's anthology, *Old Grandpa*

## Third Cemetery

Jenny Wilson

Sydney Burrows, aged 28 years, was the 45<sup>th</sup> person buried in the Third Cemetery. He was a 2<sup>nd</sup> class passenger from Western Australia on the SS Orizaba which was quarantined for smallpox. He died of Cardiac failure – pneumonia on 16 May 1898.