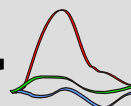




The Kedron Brook Babbler



The Newsletter of Kedron Brook Catchment Branch - Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland

Covering the environmental interests of the individuals, groups and organisations living in and near the Kedron Brook Catchment Area, Brisbane, Australia

December 2008

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"Give us the luxuries of life, and we will dispense with its necessities."

'J.L. Motley, 1814-1877'

Special interest points:

- *Aconophora compressa* mothers love *Lantana* for their nymphs!
- *Nature beats Velcro* hooks to the *Patent Office!*
- *Progress still has its price*
- *Ollie to fly the coop soon!*

Storms Wreck Flora and Fauna Habitats

Notwithstanding the severe damage inflicted on our community to infrastructure and housing, together with the personal suffering, injury and at least one death, spare a thought for our flora and fauna that also have been delivered a king hit from the November storms.

Before the storms, Wahminda Grove Bushcare Group maintained a superb level of flora maintenance, gradually expanding their total area through a methodical system of weed removal, mulching and planting.

But the ferocity of the Sunday November 6 storm was such that a significant number of trees lost most of their leaves and small branches, many their tops and numerous trees fell bodily to the ground.

Of course, Wahminda Grove was not the only place affected in our catchment in this way. Although the severity diminished with distance from the proximity to the storm's path that night, following storms over that week spread the mayhem throughout South East Queensland.

The hail must have been frightening to wildlife. I was told that on the next day scores of Rainbow Lorikeets were found apparently dead on the ground under their roosting trees at the Ferny Grove Railway Station parking area.

(Continued on page 4)



Before the onslaught at Wahminda Grove



After the storm, the reduction in leaf density, in numbers of branches per tree and of standing trees produces a harsh-looking forest

Gateway Motorway Deviation Advances



Part of the Gateway Upgrade Project, this Gateway Motorway deviation and airport interchange should vastly improve the travel times in the area, though also with some environmental concerns. This panorama (Photo: Robert Standish-White) shows the huge six lane motorway construction crossing Kedron Brook Floodway near Banyo.

Close consultation has been kept between our Branch executive and constructors Leighton Abigroup Joint Venture.

BrisConnections is delivering the \$4.8 billion Airport Link, the Northern Busway (Windsor to Kedron) and the Airport Roundabout Upgrade projects - Australia's biggest road infrastructure project.

<http://www.brisconnections.com.au/default.aspx?tabid=54>, links to an excellent overview of their responsibilities, accountabilities, and of what and how they're doing things.

(CI)



All of us will be aware of the devastation wrought across the upper catchment in recent storms – see the website for graphic evidence. Our hearts go out to all those who suffered as a result.

Various thoughts cross the mind in reviewing such violent events; will this kind of weather become more common, as predicted, with climate change?

How much of this is induced by our activities, both as a global species and in dealing with our local environment? While some may argue the case on the former we cannot ignore the evidence on the latter – we have stripped out the river valleys and are busy settling the hills.

Reduced areas of woodland tend to lose a larger proportion to violent weather, suffering higher “edge factor” risks. Growing areas of impervious surfaces such as roofs and roads increase the volume and speed of run off, reducing absorption and increasing flash flooding. And the content of those floods tends to be more toxic and polluted with road waste, packaging, chemicals and erosion.

Perhaps one minor win in the suddenly altered Brook is that many of the weed patches have been ripped out by the floodwaters!

We should be calling for remedial action on all such issues and supporting those already in hand – replanting, pervious paving, water sensitive urban design, retention of woodland, weed



This chain of Australian Wood-ducks stopped the bikers and walkers at Dawson Parade recently. Ma and Pa duck guarded both ends.

eradication... you will all have another one you know of.

Change is vital to life, but sometimes it can be quite shocking. What we must strive for is a resilient and balanced system that can recover from and adapt to such crises.

While this may seem a pipe dream we “cannot afford”, in reality we will all be much the richer for attaining it, both humanity and all the other denizens of our river systems.

We wish you all a safe, relaxed and happy Christmas season, and look forward to working and learning together in 2009.

Robert Standish-White
President

Snippets

Ollie the Possum to Venture Out Soon

Ollie (introduced in our last issue) is now over half a kilogram and a happy healthy thriving possum. He is still having a drink of milk at night but will soon be weaned and eating a diet of only wild foods. It's a good thing Ollie really loves his leaf.

Home for Ollie is now an outside aviary and bed is a wooden possum box. When it is time for him to go (about February next year), his box will be put up a tree so he can return to it whenever he likes.

He will be released at his carer's house and is already getting to know the local possums who come to say hello through the wire of his cage.

(Debbie Turnbull)



Ollie the Possum (Debbie Turnbull)

BCC seeks public opinion on trees

Brisbane residents are being urged to take part in the Council's review of the way trees are planted on public streets.

Hullo again!

On 16 November, Jenny and I were lucky to have had only two broken skylights, the usual freezer loads of deteriorated food from power outages and one small garage carpet go rotten after copping a soaking from under the front roller door.

Most of our neighbours suffered loss of trees and residues of forest remnants around water-courses and parkland were given a thrashing. We lost our own Lilly Pilly and Grevillia from our front garden.

It's reasonable to have our local government reviewing policies on the type and position of trees on our footpaths. (See below) but I have some serious concern as to what importance will be given to the preservation of our wildlife corridors in this process.

Currently, we are facing another threat from the Trail Bikes Campaign. There seems to be a huge difference between the claims being made about responsible Trail Bikes supporters preserving our environment and the real picture of what destruction has already occurred from it in our diminishing remnants of forest corridor.

If you wish, please contact Environment Committee Chairman Peter Matic, 50 High Street, Toowong 4066 with your views on both issues above. Or phone: 07 3403 2520 or Email: toowong.ward@ecn.net.au

Cheers & Merry Christmas!

Charles Ivin

The City Council announced on Monday November 24 that it was reassessing its trees policy, after damage caused by last week's severe storms.

Environment Committee chairman Peter Matic says people have four months to make a submission.

"It's a Brisbane City Council review but what will be important is that we want as much public consultation as possible," he said.

"At this point we haven't finalised the full structure of it but what I would really ask people to do is once we have put this structure in place - and I'm working on that at the moment and we should have that out shortly - is that we will then begin a process of public consultation which will run to the middle of March

(ABC news website 25 November)

Dawson Parade Bushcare Group

This site runs along the south bank of Kedron Brook near the Arana Hills Leagues Club. The Dawson Parade Bushcare Group started rehabilitation in May 2001 at the Dawson Parade Bridge and are now working downstream from a pedestrian causeway, located about 400 metres from the road bridge. The water table allows a near continual, albeit small, flow in the Brook from this point.

The small but energetic group is currently led by Ray and Di Loughrey.

In the planning stages, and subsequently,



Other areas are more open

personnel from the Grovely TAFE Centre provided valuable assistance and the Brisbane City Council "Habitat" organisation gave expert advice, supplied materials such as mulch and native shrubs, and the tools to achieve their goals. The group have steadily increased their knowledge of native plants in the process.

The group regularly work to rehabilitate the southern creek bank and flood-plain of the stream using the nucleus of remnant native vegetation, including some superb *Waterhousia floribunda* (Weeping Lillypilly tree).



Some areas are deeply covered in trees

The site has been altered over the years with major developments nearby and 'grey water' drainage pipes embedded in the creek (reports have fish and birds being caught for food by locals in the 1930's and 1940's). Parts of the embankment consist of a thin veneer of mulch covering concrete and rock fill. Apart from a few surviving shade trees, there was little native plant diversity and vegetative structural complexity remaining.

Physical degradation of the site has been accompanied by weed infestations.

Using a variety of methods the weeds

(Continued on page 4)



They make a great cuppa tea at the end!

Learn that Weed!



**Silver-leaved Desmodium
(Desmodium uncinatum)**

A Class R environmental weed under local Council regulation, this perennial vine was brought in from South America as a pasture plant and is now apparently naturalised. (Yep! We're stuck with it!)

The stems are covered with sparse to moderately dense hooked spreading hairs, rather like Velcro hooks which readily attach to clothing, and to animal fur.

There's a very characteristic silver stripe down the middle of each of the leaflets mostly formed in threes. Each leaflet is egg-shaped.

Flowers are pink, mauve or blue and less than 1 cm long. These are formed in inflorescences up to about 10 cm long.

The seed pods, covered with the hooked hairs, are divided into 2 to 10 segments.

A Byron Shire wildlife carer was said to have reported that both a boobook owl and a frog got caught in the sticky weed's foliage and starved to death. (CI)

Birds Survey 2008

A total of 12 surveys have been conducted at representative areas along Kedron Brook Catchment this year.

Some doubling up was deliberately designed into the program so that some seasonal variations might be seen.

It was particularly pleasing to have found 25 different species of birds in the survey led by Dawn Muir, Birds Queensland, at Maureen Lawrence Park, adjacent to Wahminda Picnic Grounds, Brisbane Forest Park. This was carried out on 26 November, ten days after the powerful storm on the 16th.

Wahminda and Ironbark Picnic Parks had



Scaly-Breasted Lorikeet finds a nest.

been closed to allow Brisbane Forest Park staff to remove debris from paths and grassy areas. Although Maureen Lawrence Park was not officially closed but care had to be taken to avoid fallen trees, branches and limbs still attached loosely to trees above.

Tiny birds such as the Striated Pardalote, Variegated Fairywren, and Brown Gerygone flitted through the shattered Eucalypt forest.

Medium sized birds such as the Brown Cookoo-Dove, Lewin's Honeyeater, Blue-faced Honeyeater, Rufus Fantail, and Eastern Whipbird were noted

amongst the trees and larger birds such as the Olive-backed Oriole, a pair of Collared Sparrow-hawks, and a Laughing Kookaburra were more readily viewed.

It's hoped to continue these surveys next year in order to provide an important indicator of the state of our Brook's biodiversity over time.

(CI)



A group of bird lovers found plenty of interest at Maureen Lawrence Park, 26 November

**KEDRON BROOK CATCHMENT
BRANCH (INC.)**

PO Box 1385
STAFFORD QLD 4053

Email: enquiries@kedronbrook.org.au
ABN: 67 730 668 521

President : Robert Standish-White 3862 1186
Secretary :

***You'll get hooked with Kedron
Brook!***



Before the storm at Wahminda Grove

(Storms - continued from page 1)

Another person said they had only been stunned. Either way, I would not have been happy to have lived through that storm on the branch of a tree!

Because the debris of fallen trees and their branches poses a huge disposal problem, large mechanical equipment is being used to remove accessible waste.

Let's hope there isn't too much damage to the underlying natural and recently planted native seedlings below the debris.

(C Ivin)



Afterwards, trees stripped or fallen

(Dawson Parade Bushcare Grp continued from page 3)

are removed, the ground prepared and a selection of plant species (as far as possible from seed collected from local plants) replace the weeds. Revegetation plants include natives that provide a food source and a secure environment for small birds and animals.

The group hopes that users of the concrete walkway / bikeway may enjoy the restored bushland and perhaps get a feel for the rich, verdant habitat that once covered this part of the Kedron Brook. Adjacent grass lawns provide play areas for family outings.

(Ray Loughrey / CI)

We're on the web!

www.kedronbrook.org.au

***" The greatest thing in the
world is to know how to be
self sufficient."***

(Michel De Montaigne, 1533-1592)

***Our committee wishes
YOU and yours the very
best for the coming
Festive Season and a
happy, safe and
healthy New Year.***



Female stem-sucking bug (*Aconophora compressa*) shown right, tending her nymphs on lantana at the Weed Workshop, 9 Nov. 08.

Dates for your Diary:

Tuesday 17 February	Kedron Brook Catchment Branch Meeting Tuesday, 17 February, 7:30 pm—9:30 pm, at Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, 815 Rode Rd, McDowall. Presentation details to follow on website. Social supper afterwards.
Hopefully found soon	Wanted intelligent, sociable person with basic secretarial skills and a deep love of the environment, (especially of Kedron Brook Catchment) to work as KBCB-WPSQ Secretary with like inspired minds within our Branch.



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