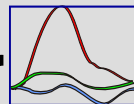




The Kedron Brook Babbler



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, Brisbane, Australia

December 2010

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'A willing helper does not wait until he is asked'

(Unknown)

[but worldly wise!]

Special interest points:

- Photographers to get a grandstand image viewing page
- Wildlife carers deserve all the regular support they get
- Phaphiolepis is not just a sweet name for an Indian
- Winners are grinners

Glideways – One in the hand, two in the bush

Queensland is home to all six of Australia's gliders, and five of them call South-East Queensland home. As such, the Kedron Brook Catchment Branch is undertaking a project, in conjunction with WPSQ's Glider Network Program, over the next six months to discover if these sweet faced and elusive creatures are surviving in the suburb of Ferny Grove. Launched on 6 November with a BBQ, information stalls and a Geckoes Wildlife Presentations show, Glideways in Ferny Grove is focussing on remnant bushland from Arbor Street through to Kirralee Crescent and is seeking to establish whether there are glider's present with the expertise of ecologist, Damian White, and our enthusiastic locals.

After seeing a real live Squirrel glider at the launch in the hands of Geckoes presenter, Martin, the first 'spotter walk' was held on Saturday 20 November. As night fell, participants were first taken through the techniques for spotting gliders, before heading out with Damian to give it a go themselves.

To the amazement of the team, two Squirrel gliders were spotted, one of which glided before the team's eyes between the trees. It was a fantastic find for the first survey, adding extra validity to this project and the work of groups such as Ferny Grove Bushcare. In addition to



This Sugar glider was the star turn at the Geckoes Wildlife presentation on 6 November

the two gliders, it was a fruitful night with eight Ringtail possums, and a Tawny Frogmouth also spotted.

There will be two more evening spotter walks held early in 2011. The community survey team currently has a full contingent. However, we encourage anyone who is interested to learn more about the Glideways in Ferny Grove project, or Ferny Grove Bushcare to contact Anna Bourke on phone 3407 0925 or email anna.bourke@brisbane.qld.gov.au.

This project has been made possible with the support of the Brisbane City Council Environmental Grants Scheme and Cr Andrew Wines, Enoggera Ward. (Anna Bourke)

Bird sightings tally expands

Birding activities have been carried out at specific locations along the Brook during the years 2008 to 2010 as part of a comprehensive series of walks. Such recorded observations conducted over time allow evaluation of the health and biodiversity of wildlife throughout the catchment.

Over the three years of bird studies, the number of bird species observed varied from only 11 up to 50 per outing depending upon the overall timing, month and variety of habitat at the location. Overall, we observed 123, 90 and 107 different bird species respectively over the



Birding group at outfall of the Brook at Nudgee Beach on 7 November

2008, 2009 and 2010 walks conducted. Taken over the first two years, we actually observed 138 different species, a consequence of the fact that not all bird species were observed in both periods. Now, after three years of observations, we have observed a total of 150 different species along the Brook.

As expected, the most common birds are the Australian Magpie, Laughing Kookaburra, Magpie-lark, Noisy Miner, Pacific Black Duck, Pied Butcherbird, Rainbow Lorikeet, Spotted Dove, Striated Pardalote, Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo, Torresian Crow and Willie Wagtail.

(Continued on page 4)



Well, one can hardly avoid the issue this year – it's WET! After years of watching our catchment battle with decreasing flows and ground moisture we, in true Australian tradition, have been pitched into a flood year with all the concomitant challenges that brings. It will likely take several good years to replenish groundwater, but plants respond within days. Our problem is that many of our indigenous plants are being outgrown by rampant weeds. We must grab the opportunities that a good season brings for rejuvenation, while not forgetting the hard lessons of frugality and long sightedness learnt in the drought.

One issue that floods make obvious is the amount of litter being tossed into the catchment, with swathes of plastic and polystyrene draped along every other high water mark. Council can be asked to retrieve particularly indecent piles via their website, and we can all do a bit on our own, but it remains a symptom of our over consumption that we can afford to throw so much away, and our loss of connection to nature that we don't care where it goes.

On a similar vein recent articles (see at <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=oceanic-dead-zones-spread>) note the alarming spread of oceanic dead



John Tennock (Transition The Grove), John Jordaan (Ferny Grove Bushcare Leader) with Cr Andrew Wines (Enogerra Ward, BCC) at the Glider Project launch

zones, largely as a result of what we are allowing to run into rivers, combined with increased organic carbon input to the seas. Given that the oceans are the source and moderator of all life on the planet this must surely be yet another wake up call to change our habits. Getting our Brook up from a lowly "F" on the recent SEQ waterways quality assessment would be a fine start!

We have a great project on gliders running in the upper catchment, and will be planning for both long and short term activities in the year ahead, designated the

(Continued on page 4)

Hello again.

The overhaul of our web site design is just about finished but the content is sometimes years behind. Bushcare groups wanting to project their best image on the web site will find me very keen to help them. We want their bushcare group page to reflect their very own thoughts and aspirations. Others who can't or won't support their network web site may soon find their pages updated for them—someone has to care.

Budding photographers along the Brook should watch out for our next web site project; a photo display page about the Brook. This will vary in subject and work on a displacement principle. Only so many images will fit on the one page. New ones loaded in will displace older ones out of the site so that there will be a progressive change over movement. To make the most of available space, we are using thumbnails first up that you click on if you want to get the full picture (same as we do with the thumbnails on our home page). Please let me know what you think.

The years race by when you're having fun! We hope you've had a good year but are also looking forward to our next one.

Cheers!
Charles Ivin

Snippets

Winners are grinners – Nundah State School @ Catchment Kids

On 21 October, all the participating Catchment Kids schools met at the Suncorp Piazza to share their learning experiences from the year with creative presentations.

Class 5/6K presented a play in a comic strip style. While the story had a super hero, Captain Environment, and his sidekick, Baby Environment, who fought the personified threats to the Brook, 5/6K's message was clear – *'this doesn't happen in real life, waterways need everyone to PROTECT NOT POLLUTE!'* This humorous and engaging play won them the Catchment Kids title for 2010, along with the Lord Mayor's trophy, a Steve Parish book pack for their library, and \$1500 to spend on an environmental project in their school. (Anna Bourke)

Kalinga Park Centenary Celebration

November 13 was a beautiful day to celebrate Kalinga Park's 100th Birthday. KBCB and local bushcare group members set up a wonderful information stall along side a Geckoes Wildlife presentation

which marked the end of the Kalinga Park Restoration Project. A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped out on the day it was very much appreciated!

(Anna Bourke)

World Wetlands Week catchment tour

KBCB in partnership with the Brisbane City Council Environment Centres is running another catchment tour on Sunday 30 January. Celebrating both the International Year of Forests & World Wetlands Day on 2 February, the tour will take in the forests and wetland areas of the Kedron Brook catchment, with a morning tea break in one of the Brook picturesque parks.

Cost for the tour is \$5/head, and places are limited – so hurry and contact Anna Bourke on phone 34070925 or email anna.bourke@brisbane.qld.gov.au to book your spot today. (Anna Bourke)



Our Creek Ranger, Anna Bourke, with Deborah Turnbull at the Kalinga Park Centenary Celebration

BCC WaterSmart Strategy is now available

To guide Brisbane towards the goal of becoming Australia's most sustainable and water smart city, Brisbane City Council has now finalised its WaterSmart Strategy – a process which began in 2009.

Through a balanced approach that protects and improves waterway health and creates well-designed vibrant and liveable spaces that are economically viable, Brisbane City Council aims to achieve the goal of

being a water smart city.

To view Council's WaterSmart Strategy and find out how you can help to manage our water sustainably, visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/watersmartcity.

(Bec Smith, BCC)

Mangrove Survey progresses

The Nudgee MangroveWatch team gathered on the morning of the last day of October this year, welcoming one new member, Hannah Rowan, and one visiting member from another group who had come along to listen to Chris Pfitzner give us some retraining. It had been found that results from the various sites seemed to vary inexplicably, so methods are being checked and in some cases changed. We, for instance, had only been counting crab holes, not all holes. Some of the photographic records will also change.

Anyway, it was a fine morning and we squished across to our now familiar stakes to set out our transects and review progress. Happily all seemed to be in good order, with young whelks and crabs evident amongst the pneumatophores (the air breathing rootlets that poke up through the mud). Fairly minimal dead wood in the trees and healthy algal growth on the roots was also encouraging.



Mangroves near Nudgee Beach
(Robert Standish-White)

Nick Hoffman of QPWS also pointed out for us the different periwinkles and marine snails that climb quite high into the mangroves between sessions



Mud whelk at Nudgee (Robert Standish-White)

of algal grazing. All of this reinforces the critical role mangroves play in coastal ecosystems.

After reviewing our record sheets and washing off the equipment we gathered for a coffee and snack at 'Pam's Café', chatting about other sites and the future of the Bay.

Sadly Chris will be moving on to other duties, and Nick will take on our supervision in addition to his coordination of the Seagrass Watch activities. We are happy to be part of an increase in our knowledge base that is essential for informed decision making, and good fun to do!

(Robert Standish-White)



Mangrove in flower

(Robert Standish-White)

Learn that weed!



Common Indian Hawthorn
(*Phaphiolepis indica*)

This environmental weed is a robust, spreading, low growing shrub growing to 1.5 m. high.

Leaves are thick, leathery, elliptical to egg-shaped, mostly hairless, usually with clearly serrated edges.

With five petals, the white or pale pink flowers are star-shaped, and grow at the branch tips in loose clusters through spring and summer.

Fruits are small, purplish-black berries, eagerly eaten by many bird species. Thus the 1–2 seeds each berry are readily dispersed.

Ranked as 101st in the Invasive Naturalised Plants in Southeast Queensland (Queensland Herbarium), the plant has a moderate invasive score of 3.5 (max 5).

Recorded as being a class R weed in the current declared weeds list by Brisbane City Council. Plant, eradication is not a viable option but plants should be removed during routine maintenance.

(C 1)

Being a wildlife carer has its ups and downs

Being a wildlife carer is a mixed bag. Some of the injured and orphaned animals make it, but many do not. Of all the adult animals that are rescued, most have horrid injuries from cars, cats and dogs, electrocution and many other human-caused disasters. They need to be 100% fit on release and those that are suffering, or will never make a full recovery, are euthanased. For those that are patched up and sent to a carer the odds are better.

This little ringtail (image right) was a young back-rider, still learning the art of hanging on while mum moves around in the tree-tops. He was about four months old, and getting little ones this size is common. Usually they have just lost their mum and need someone else to raise them. This little boy was one of the unlucky ones

that fall prey to cats. The cat grabbed him over the hips and he was paralysed in the hind legs. A tooth probably severed a nerve in the spine. He was given pain relief and anti-inflammatories and given two days to show some sign of improvement. He didn't, and had to be euthanased. This is why we always ask people to keep their cats inside, especially at night and at dawn and dusk.

Wildlife carers do not have long to cry over the ones we lose because there is always some other animal that needs to be fed. I have twelve possums (and a carpet python) in care at the moment. One baby is not well and has me very worried but the rest are fat and healthy and I can't wait for them to be released.

I would like to thank Brisbane City



Four month old Ring-tailed Possum, having just been fed, about to go to bed

Council for their financial assistance. A recent grant contributed significantly to covering the cost of feeding and housing the animals I have had in care over the last six months.

(Deborah Turnbull)

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www.kedronbrook.org.au

Restoring Corridors 2 Project

Successful applicants of the first and second waves of this project can apply for the second Weed Workshop to extend their skills and knowledge of bushland management. This will be held for applicants on Saturday 19 February at Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, Rode Road, McDowall from approx. 8:30 am (for a 9 am start) to about 1:00 pm.

Likewise, given sufficient interest, KBCB will assist in organising up to three 'Help your neighbour' working bees on three different properties throughout March & April. Contact Anna Bourke!

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 30 January	Kedron Brook Catchment Bus Tour celebrates International Year of Forests & World Wetlands Day - Take in the forests and wetland areas of the Kedron Brook catchment. Morning tea break in one of the Brook picturesque parks. Cost \$5/head. Places are limited – so hurry and contact Anna on 3407 0925.
Wednesday 2 February	Northern Seminar Series 2 February 2011, Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, 815 Rode Rd, McDowall. Drink and finger food at 6.30 pm for presentation at 7.00 pm to 8 pm. RSVP or contact Anna on 3407 0925
Tuesday 15 February	Kedron Brook Catchment Branch General and Network Meeting 15 February, at Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, 815 Rode Rd, McDowall. Join us at 7:00 pm for pre-meeting drinks and nibbles. Meeting runs 7:30 pm-9:30 pm. Presentation followed by discussion on 2011 program. RSVP Robert on 3862 1186.
Sunday 6 February	Bird Observation Walks - 6 February 7.00 am Cassimarty & Arbor Parks (UBD Map 117 ref D17) Contact our Coordinator, Jenny Ivin, on 3851 0160 to register or to obtain more details. Check on our web site home page for any changes.

(State of the Brook continued from page 2)

“Year of the Forest”. A speaker from the BCC's Two million trees programme will enlighten us at the April branch meeting, and perhaps we can quiz them on how serious they are about the “ecological corridors for wildlife movement” espoused in their 2026 mission statement...

Do join us at events, and contact us with ideas, and from the committee, have a safe, joyful and just dry enough festive season!

Robert Standish-White
President



All eyes are directed upwards to see a sugar glider high in a Eucalypt at the Arbor Park survey last month.

(Bird Observations continued from page 1)

Bird species that were only observed on one walk over the three years were many but the most “exciting finds” were probably the Australasian Bittern, Black-shouldered Kite, Brown Gerygone, Grey Goshawk, Large-billed Scrubwren, Northern Mallard, Pale-vented Bush-hen, Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo and a Square-tailed Kite.

Our web site has tables of our full sightings that are best linked from the news items for each year or you can surf via our ‘Google search’ facility from any web page.

Details of our 2011 program can be linked from our home page under ‘Projects’. Bird lovers are always welcome on our walks! (Jenny Ivin)



This Tawny frogmouth also turned up during our Glider workshop survey night activity



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



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