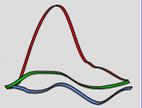


The Kedron Brook Babbler



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

October 2010

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'The degree of a nation's civilisation is marked by its disregard for the necessities of existence.'

*(W. Somerset Maugham
1874-1965)*

Special interest points:

- See *Phyllanthus tenellus* on your way at the Forum
- Yes, *Pteropus alecto* is the Black, not the Grey Headed Flying fox!
- Flaunt your knowledge about fungi on page 3
- A Ground Spider on a tree!?

Threatened Species Day—2010

It was a warm and invigorating spring morning on Friday 3 September, perfect for introducing year 8 science students from Everton Park State High to their local Flying Fox (aka Fruit Bats) population. This high school is lucky enough to be adjacent to one of the Kedron Brook catchments special natural areas, Sparkes Hill Reserve. With Threatened Species Day (7 September 2010) looming, the opportunity to raise the students awareness of one of the reserves most important inhabitants was taken.

Sparkes Hill Reserve is a key area of habitat, playing host to a significant camp of Flying Foxes – specifically the Grey Headed Flying Fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*); and Black Flying Fox (*Pteropus alecto*). On the day, the year 8 students learnt of the plight of the often maligned Flying Foxes. Students participated in an activity covering the issue of habitat destruction and fragmentation, and the problems this causes in terms of Flying Fox/human relations.

They were also introduced to Gilbert the Bat by Louise Saunders, from Batcare. Through Gilbert the students were able to see up close some of the special characteristics of Flying Foxes. Such as their amazing wings, which make them the only mammal in the world to achieve true flight – allowing them to travel up to 200kms in a night! They then took up binoculars



Everton Park SHS students get the lowdown on flying foxes at Sparkes Hill, Fri. 3 September

to check out the resident camp over 100m from their school boundary.

To finish up, students helped re-establish native vegetation and tackled erosion on their school grounds by planting hundreds of *Lomandra*. Another important outcome for the morning was the students meeting some of the team of people involved in looking after BCC natural areas, in particular, Sparkes Hill Bushcare. Of special note are Bob Robbie, Sparkes Hill Bushcare; Melissa Cooper, BCC Natural Area Coordinator / Conservation Ranger; and Cath Cleary, BCC Habitat Brisbane Officer.

For more on Flying Foxes, go to <http://www.bats.org.au/> (Anna Bourke)

Celebrate Kalinga Park Centenary !

The initiating phase of the Kalinga Park Restoration project is complete. Made possible through funding from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country, this doesn't mean an end to work for progress at this site!

The amazing working response over the last 12 – 18 months from the local community has led to the formation of a new Habitat Brisbane group together with the regeneration of a huge area of remnant bush.

I am negotiating with BCC's Wipe-Out Weeds program to ensure that weed control is maintained in the more difficult areas of the site. KBCB, with direction and input from the Kalinga Park Bushcare Group will look to obtain further funding for the site. The focus will be to enhance the restoration efforts and create a site of valuable habitat for our urban wildlife, and to protect and improve the Brook's water quality.

Congratulations to David Colbert, Bush

Regeneration Specialist and the local residents whose efforts will now be ongoing through the Kalinga Park Bushcare Group. Please contact Bernadette by email at bernadette-crook@hotmail.com to join this newly formed bushcare group.

See the Diary about our Hamilton Ward's Kalinga Park Centenary Celebration on Saturday 9 October, between 1 pm and 5 pm. (Anna Bourke)



Keen supporters of the Kalinga Park Group



Anyone involved in a volunteer organisation will vouch for the reality that we grapple with a small and ageing membership, a multiplicity of good causes vying for limited funding, and how to engage the public in what we believe to be important. Speakers at both the recent THECA workshop and WPSQ AGM urged us to reassess our strategies. We need to be part of our times, not necessarily to acquiesce to new norms, but to understand how they work and what opportunities they might present. We need to be able to read the wave so we may ride it rather than be rolled by it. In essence, think laterally and prepared to change.



Robert Standish-White at the Wildlife Queensland AGM

This may be as simple as making better use of new technologies to reach out, or a new format and venue for meetings. But for long term viability bigger ideas are needed – we need to really analyse what it is we want to achieve and all the means of getting there. These need to be rationally costed so current and potential members can be clear of their choices. Accepted formulae and

wisdoms need to be shaken out for relevance, Hugh Possingham challenging us to be both realistic and radical in how we work to save and improve our environment. If a strategy has not worked to date, try another, move on. Rather than being paralysed and demoralised by the immensity of the problem, find a way round it.

We may have to work with groups we previously thought antithetical to our cause, do things until now viewed as heretical (moving species, using weeds, public access to wildlife areas), and be prepared to take some risks. As in many a human endeavour, communication is an absolutely key issue in this mix. Small groups like ours can be planting the seeds of knowledge both locally (as in our schools program) and in the corridors of power so in time we cultivate a growing awareness and ownership of the fight for

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Hello again.

I was having a low point in my life battling some persistent lawn weeds when, looking for inspiration, I decided to look up our trusty Weeds Identification on the BCC web site, <http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/environment-waste/weeds/index.htm>.

Although it had 173 weeds in its ID database, there were only 35 herbs listed; none of which looked like my prime lawn terrors. Despite the undoubted importance of this database, it was obviously designed to relate to declared weeds and much higher priority invasive weeds than my low importance lawn invaders. An adjacent helpful link list to other web sites involved me in a few hours of distractions and blind alleys.

I still don't know how it happened; though possibly through using a search box. But I found out the wonders of BCC's Forum, 'Wipe out weeds' at the website, <http://forums.brisbane.qld.gov.au/>. Someone had already had sent in a photo of one of my weeds and the moderator had pronounced it as being *Phyllanthus tenellus* or *virgatus*! A really friendly and helpful forum!

Oh yes, it was also on page 43 of my copy of 'Suburban weeds' but not so informative! Cheers!

Charles Ivin

Snippets

Zion Hill Bushcare Group

The Albert Bishop Parklands at Toombul are benefiting from the results of consistent weeding by our small but dedicated group. We get great support from Brisbane City Council with clearing and mulching. The site now presents as a series of well-tended garden bed areas with bushland tracks leading to a lovely stream.

Our site is special in that it is adjacent to the historic Nundah Cemetery and also contains one of the last remnant stands of Melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) in the Kedron Brook catchment.

There is a new sign near the Rotunda that advises the work of our group and details of our monthly working bees. We'd love to have you join us on the first Saturday of the month, usually 7 am to 9 am followed by morning tea. Contact our Leader Jean Weaver on 3266 5294 for more details.

(Virginia Lawrence)

Catchment Kids meet at Seventh Brigade Park

Students from classes 5/6K, Nundah State School, as Kedron Brook's Catchment Kids this year, joined in the tree planting

activity conducted at Seventh Brigade Park on Friday 30 July.

This involved each student in a practical approach to revegetation. It followed school presentation visits by our Creek Ranger, Anna Bourke. These expanded upon the students' knowledge of catchments and their importance as environmental habitats for wildlife.

(Charles Ivin)

Partnership potential at Wahminda Grove

A site meeting was held on Tuesday 14 September to discuss with members of the Wahminda Grove Bushcare Group opportunities for a partnership with owners of an adjacent property. This bushcare group is already located in a unique spot between the local government boundaries of Brisbane City Council and Moreton Bay Regional Council.

Many project ideas came out of the meeting and are being considered for the group's future program. This continuing partnership between BCC and MBRC Officers, and KBCB and the bushcare group will continue to be nurtured for the catchment's future benefit.

(Anna Bourke)



Our Creek Ranger, Anna Bourke, with Nick Chilton, Catchment Kid from Nundah State School at Seventh Brigade Park



Meeting of the minds at the planning meeting with Wahminda Grove Bushcare Group on Tuesday 14 September

This year's forum on 11 September marked the tenth for this dedicated community group; a record to be rightly proud of. Well housed and catered for at the Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies (QCAT) in Pullenvale, participants were treated to a range of eight speakers who covered the science and the practice, the flora and the politics.

Two presentations looked at soils, one from the geological and statewide perspective, outlining the various main types and what might grow on them. Words like 'vertosols' and 'selodic' from Adrian Webb made us feel very learned, while important soil characteristics include chemistry, depth, hydraulics and organic input. Soil is one of the main drivers for biodiversity along with climate, landscape and time. Miriam Paul laid out pathways for soil rehabilitation following land clearing, including one of allowing the camphor laurels to do some work and protect incoming natives before being phased out by killing them in situ.

Still under the surface, Patrick Leonard reminded us how utterly essential fungi are to most plant communities, from their obvious roles in rotting fallen matter to the partnering they do with virtually all plants on earth. This virtually unknown kingdom (only an estimated 4% have been described to date) between animals and plants must be present for any flora to thrive – lay off those fungicides! Under another surface, water this time, we were given the bad news of just how bad dams, chemicals and weeds have been for our river biodiversity, this example being the



After the rains, come the fungi...

Brisbane. Anne Kemp told us how many species have disappeared altogether, and the few remaining lungfish are found emaciated and producing non-viable young. A common theme raised again here is that there is often not enough knowledge around the subject to effectively address it.

Close to the surface, Don Sands told of the drastic effects widespread introduced flammable grasses are having, huge mono stands that may produce fat cattle but are decimating invertebrate and floral diversity. Without some vigorous planned control measures extirpations and extinctions are likely.

Two speakers talked on ecological restoration. Justin Watson talked generally of planning, and how to walk the fine line between sterile paucity and chaotic over-complication. Frances Guard took us on an uplifting screen tour of their ongoing restoration of the Dilkusha Nature Refuge on the Sunshine Coast.

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Milkweed (*Euphorbia heterophylla*)

This weed is an erect annual herb up to 1.5 m high. Milky sap oozes from damaged stems and leaves.

Leaves are ovate to rhomboid, 0.5 – 5 cm wide, paler towards the base with margins entire or slightly toothed.

Leafy bracts around the flower heads are totally green though leaves around flower clusters are paler green at base. (A similar plant, Painted spurge, *Euphorbia cyanthophora*, presents with pinkish red upper-most leaves.)

Flower heads have a characteristic cyathium form, similar to a Poinsettia.

Fruits are 3-lobed and when the pods ripen, spread the seeds by explosive release.

Ranked as 182th in the Invasive Naturalised Plants in Southeast Queensland-Queensland Herbarium, the plant has a moderate invasive score of 3.4 (max 5).

Recorded as being toxic to stock though not specifically listed in the current declared weeds by Brisbane City Council.

(C 1)

Kedron Brook Catchment tour

On 22 August, branch and network members were given a special opportunity to see the progress of significant projects along Kedron Brook. This catchment tour was conducted in a timely manner with lots of two-way communication between participants.

Lyn Farrell presented her progress in the removal of weed species and the re-establishment of both forest and understory layers from suitable natives. Plans to stabilise serious bank erosion drew much discussion about the various alternatives.

Renowned for the superb sandstone sculptures and mosaic imagery, Pony Club Bend, Mitchelton, continues to receive the energetic efforts of the Tuesday Tree Liberators by way of massive weed removal and bush regeneration. Also a good place for a sociable lunch time break.



Lyn Farrell outlines the ways in which she has combated weeds and flooding

The tour group took the opportunity to look closely at a BCC Waterway Health Enhancement project in nearby Teralba Park. The aim is to plant canopy trees and stabilize the creek from erosion and sediment deposition.



Tuesday Tree Liberators' hospitality enjoyed at the Pony Club grounds

The tour finished at Kalinga Park (See item on page 1). The tour group was impressed with the progress being made, particularly on the difficult steep slopes near Carew St and Royal Ave.

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(State of the Brook continued from page 2)

a better place for all living things.

Whilst these are grand notions and need to be tackled, we should always keep a foot on the ground with some fun and humour in the mix. We celebrate the completion of the Kalinga Park Restoration project at the centenary of the park on 9 October; see you there and at upcoming events!

Robert Standish-White
President

Dates for your Diary:

Wednesday 6 October	Northern Seminar Series 6 October, 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. 'The Management of Invasive Fauna Species - a Local Government Perspective', presented by Robyn Jones, BCC. RSVP or contact Anna Bourke on 3407 0925
Saturday 9 October	Hamilton Ward's Kalinga Park Centenary & Kalinga Park Bushcare Group's Celebration Saturday 9 October 2010, 1 pm to 9 pm at Kalinga Park, Park Ave. Clayfield, (UBD 140 ref J3). Family activities, Geckoes Wildlife Presentations, displays, and movie entertainment. Contact our Creek Ranger phone 3407 0925
Tuesday 19 October	Kedron Brook Catchment Branch General and Network Meeting 19 October, 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 about Queensland Glider Network by Karen Brock. RSVP Robert on 3862 1186.
Sunday 7 November	Bird Surveys - 7 November 7.30 am Nudgee Waterhole Reserve (UBD Map 121 ref J10), then Kedron Brook Floodway to Nudgee Beach. 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.

(Restoring biodiversity continued from page 3)

Persistence (another common theme!), patience, volunteers and growing local support all played a part in this project.

Off the ground and in to policy and politics, Jo Bragg from the EDO encouraged us to use what legal tools are available, and press for more. She encouraged calls for a comprehensive population and biodiversity policy in the face of the 'growth at all cost' syndrome, and called for limits on development and resource extraction. Against expectations, biodiversity can be a relevant issue in major project approvals, so stand up and be counted!

The leading talk from Hugh Possingham challenged us all to re-examine our thinking in the face of the current global extinction event coupled to climate change. We must think in terms of rapid movement and change, and not become obsessed with restoring biomes that may only have a limited future. Test our attitudes towards weeds and moving species. Get people interested in nature, possibly with innovative uses, and manage all wild areas. It is essential, he argued, that nature groups develop better and more focused business plans, with clear forward projections that clarify the choices available.

Thus, like many of our gatherings, there was a mixture of gloom and grit, despair and hope. I think that despite the political sloth, many people know in their hearts things must change and we need to be the agents of that transformation, if we are to thrive, or even survive. (Robert Standish-White)



**Swift Ground Spider
(Supunna picta)**

(Catchment Tour continued from page 3)

The long-term removal of Chinese elm roots amongst the coil log terraces will be carefully staged to ensure the recently planted locally-native figs can effectively take over the area. (Charles Ivin)



**Tour group looks down the cleared slopes
at Kalinga Park Restoration project (RSW)**



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