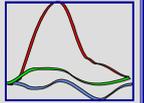




The Kedron Brook Babbler



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 2012

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'Pull the string, and it will follow wherever you wish. Push it, and it will go nowhere at all.'
'Dwight D Eisenhower (1890-1969)'

Special interest points:

- Learn about water rats
- Brook Parkers love tea breaks
- Natives aren't weeds! Except where they're not wanted!
- Monitor mangroves from boats
- We can't exist without... Biodiversity

Fiftieth Anniversary of Wildlife Queensland



The 50th Anniversary Gathering enjoyed seeing the wildlife up close during the morning exhibit

A number of special events were held this year to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our Wildlife Queensland.

Over the days of 7-8 September, Wildlife Queensland held a most successful forum, 'Talking Wildlife', at the Bardon Conference Centre, Brisbane. Attendees at this forum were treated to authoritative, interesting sessions and workshops presented by renowned leaders in research and education about wildlife environmental projects and future concerns.

To wind up the weekend, on Sunday 9 September, the Brisbane and Kedron Brook Branches of WPSQ organized a more laid back day at Downfall Creek Bushland Centre starting at 10 am. It was a great opportunity for members from mainly the Southern

Queensland branches to get together and share memories and experiences. Various displays from the branches gave a special insight to the wide range of wildlife projects being carried out within Wildlife Queensland.

Geckoes Wildlife Presentations was a particular hit; especially with the children. The Carpet Python (seen above) was most impressive. The audience appreciated the interesting information their presenter gave about each of the live wildlife specimens seen.

After a yummy luncheon, there was a 50th Birthday cake cutting ceremony launched by our patron, Margaret Thorsborne. Then, we set in for the serious stuff; the Annual General Meeting with reports and election of officers. Our WPSQ President Simon Baltais was re-elected for another term with warm applause. (CI)

Seagrass and MangroveWatch monitoring programs

Debra Henry, Project Officer, Tide to Table - SE Queensland, is supporting the coordination and delivery of 'Seagrass Watch and Mangrove Watch' in SE Queensland. This entails improving the local community's capacity to monitor seagrass and mangrove ecosystems, enabling communities to conduct consistent methodologies for monitoring, and ensuring that the information gained is effectively recorded and forwarded to the science community to be analysed as a holistic regional dataset.

At this stage, two training sessions of two days each are being planned probably in October-November and January-February. A new 'transect' method, devised by scientists from 'James Cook University, Townsville,



Mangroves near Kedron Brook's outfall into Moreton Bay (19 November 2011)

involves filming of mangroves from a vessel.

Details of this fascinating project can be obtained by linking through the home page of our [web site](#). (Charles Ivin/Debra Henry)

State of the Brook

Well, we, like many around the State, get the feeling we are at the barricades all of a sudden. In a rather clandestine and off-hand manner, we learn that many environmental protections are being threatened or withdrawn in the name of 'fixing the economy'.

The recent 'Planning for Prosperity' legislation is a central case in point, ironically actually removing many planning protections that developers see as mere red tape. Along with the gag orders on bodies getting state funding it does feel rather like a cliff dive back into the 'bad old days' when the environment was viewed as a large resource pit.

Most of us would accept that budgets do need to be responsibly managed - it would however be good to see some open analysis and long term reasoning being put before the electorate.

Budget cuts have been sweetened with the Everyone's Environment Grants - these are quite a mess of red tape so it remains to be seen how and if we can cut our way into them. We do hope to reinvigorate a partnership with Brisbane City Council, but the Creek Ranger saga has



WPSQ President Simon Baltais with Policies and Campaigns Manager, Des Boyland at the WPSQ AGM.

been pretty sorry one, with no clear resolution in sight yet.

BCC will have recently inherited the new (finally!) opened parks at the Airport Link Tunnel portals. Unfortunately, at the Toombul end, a fair number of the plants have died pre-handover, victims of the long dry spell and perhaps a lack of concentration since the cars have been flowing for some weeks now. Will they be replaced? Watch this spot...

Various of our trees are putting out their Spring colours - September is such a pretty month - if the fickle blustering

of the weather gives them chance. Summer migrants will be flying into the wetlands, and El Nino looks like giving us a fairly mild ride this season.

So there's good news and bad news, but the energy and determination on display at the Wildlife Queensland 50th Anniversary Conference

gave us pride and encouragement to carry on. So much life and effort has been poured in over the years to save us from ourselves, we can not afford to let it slip away now.

Robert Standish-White,
President



Leanne Bowden and Greg Miller admire the WPSQ 50th Anniversary Cake

Snippets

Birding at Wahminda Grove

Our recent bird survey was conducted at Wahminda Grove Bushcare Group area and adjacent Maureen Lawrence Park, Ferny Grove on Sunday 2 September.

We set forth in sunny though rather crisp conditions. Of special mention was the family of six Brown Quail, feeding across the track in front of us on the Powerlink property. We watched for quite a while as they worked from one side of the track to the other, their colour blending into the vegetation; making it quite difficult for the photographer at times.

In the same area was a good-sized flock of Red-browed Finches; possibly up to twenty in the group that was feeding in the grasses and on the track as well, sometimes quite close to the foraging quail. Double-barred finches were seen in good number too which was lovely.

There was a bit of excitement when a pair of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew over head about tree-top level; an excellent sighting for us all. A total of thirty-seven species were seen and/or heard for this survey.

(Jenny Ivin)

Men of the Trees (MOTT)

Over the past six months or so, Men of The Trees gave their web site a close look



Mother Brown Quail and one of her four juveniles near Wahminda Park

and decided it should be changed to a new structure that allowed administration and other approved members to readily update it with the latest news content and images.

Secretary, Louise Cadell, assisted their management committee with the selection and implementation of WordPress; a powerful semantic publishing platform.

WordPress has a great set of features that allows most users to pick up the basics quickly to set up, add content and images and most important, to maintain the web site. This can be done in a more straightforward manner without the coding and more complicated maintenance involved with the traditional control of a web site.

Regardless of these advantages, all web sites still need a steady hand and good communications to ensure the outcome.



Brush Turkey building a mound in mulch at Greenbrook Association Bushcare Group's area at Grange

Tim Meyer (Webmaster, Wildlife Queensland) recently praised this system as a relatively cheap way of setting up web sites, particularly for small organisations that wanted an attractive site to communicate their activities quickly through words and graphics.

MOTT's new web site is at their usual URL of <http://www.menofthetrees.org.au>. As with any project, there will be a settling in period to get everything squeaky clean. It looks pretty good already!

(Charles Ivin)

Brush Turkeys are here to stay

I visited the Greenbrook Association Bushcare Group's area recently and must

(Snippets continued on page 4)

Bushcare along the catchment

Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) sites

The bulk of our KBCN bushcare group activities within Kedron Brook catchment lie within the Brisbane City boundary. Nevertheless, a significant area of the catchment lies within MBRC land to the west of Boundary Park, Everton Hills, along the northern side of the Brook until just short of Maureen Lawrence Park in Ferny Grove. At this point, most of the headwaters lie outside BCC area save the significant tributary, Cedar Creek.

This short article emphasises the generous assistance we receive from MBRC in this important part of the brook.

Just east of Maureen Lawrence Park, Ferny Hills, Wahminda Grove Bushcare



Kerry Walker (MOTT) at Thomsett Park, Ferny Hills, (3 December 2011)



Part of the Brook Park Bushcare Group resting at cuppa time (3 December 2011)

group is very active on the brook mainly on the northern side where they receive regular assistance from MBRC. BCC cooperates with help on their southern area in Ferny Grove.

Brook Park Bushcare Group works exclusively in a beautiful forest remnant on the MBRC side at Ferny Hills.

Men of the Trees, a great supporter of both BCC and MBRC's areas, will plant trees almost anywhere but particularly have helped develop Thomsett Prk, Ferny Hills on the north side over recent years.

Moreton Bay Regional Council provides regular support to these groups through Bushcare Officer, Wendy Heath, from the Natural Areas team of their Parks Department with assistance by contractor, Sonya Schmidtchen. Contact for information from Wendy is by phone on 3289 6588 or 0409 268 838, or MBRC Call Centre 3205 0555.

(Charles Ivin)

Learn that weed!



Native Wandering Jew (Commelina cyanea)

The Native Wandering Jew is a weak, succulent, trailing plant with green lance-shaped acute leaves contracted abruptly into a hairless sheath. Blue flowers emerge from a lance-shaped bract, with three somewhat unequal petals, usually flowering in autumn.

This plant (called a weed in some books but not BCC listed) is often found to be weedlike but as you know, natives aren't weeds! Except where they're not wanted!

[Wandering Jew](#) (*Tradescantia fluminensis*) IS clearly a weed with invasive score 4.1 in the Qld Herbarium's 'Invasive Naturalised Plants in SE Queensland' but is not in the BCC weed list. It has variegated or plain fleshier, rounded, glossy green leaves than the native, with white flowers mainly in spring and somewhat hairy leaf sheaths. (CI)

Brisbane Catchments Network

Our branch is a member of the Brisbane Catchments Network (BCN), which was formed to provide both a means of communication between groups of similar aims and a consolidated front in addressing issues of mutual concern. With valuable support from SEQ Catchments the BCN has now reached the stage of becoming incorporated and beginning to initiate actions for its members.

It (we, if you prefer!) has had positive contact with the new BCC Chair of the the Environmental Committee, Councillor Bourke, which we intend to foster as BCC is obviously the major contender in how catchment affairs play out. Working within the framework of the SEQ Regional Plan and other relevant legislation BCN is developing a Community Biodiversity Strategy; this is intended to be an accessible and useful document/website that groups can use in engaging the



Brisbane Catchments Network group view vegetation at The Gap (4 December 2008)

community on this vital issue, as well as consolidating internal understanding.

At monthly meetings, it is illuminating to see how others around our sprawling and lively city are tackling the defence of nature in their areas. Bigger groups have clubhouses and staff, smaller groups a tiny core of volunteers, but things are happening all over.



Wayne Cameron (Chairman BCN)

There is liaison on how effluent spills into waterways will be detected and remedied (Kedron Brook is lucky to have no sewage works).

BCN along with other environmental

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Melrose Creek (25 September 2012)

(Snippets continued from page 2)

say, I was amazed by the numbers of these birds in one spot. Obviously, conditions were splendid in that there was a big area of mulched revegetated bushland.

Our Branch often gets queries from people on how to handle the 'scrapping' habits of these birds in gardens and their interactions with pet dogs and cats.

Fixed plastic weed mats often discourage Scrub Turkeys if placed quickly before the birds become enamoured to the area.

Feeding should be avoided, or at least be minimal, limited to the particular species, and only at set times. Animals do learn these things and don't hang around if there's no point.

It is inevitable that living in a sub-tropical green city there will be interaction with wildlife. It is one of the attractions and privileges of Brisbane.

(C/R S-W)

Monotreme observed at Gaythorne

A regular contributor, Ian Ferrier, recently emailed, 'There is a white-tailed water-rat living in the Brook at the Burwood St Bridge (the entry to Brookside from the Griffiths St area).' Not being used to the idea of rats with white tails, my curiosity led me to check my 'Wild Guide to Moreton Bay and adjacent coasts', Queensland Museum Guide, (2011) Vol. 1.

Sure enough, Page 164, shows various distinguishing features for *Hydromys chrysogaster*, including: 'back brown-black; golden belly; small ears; flattish 'square' head; white-tipped tail. (my underline!)

I had thought the latter characteristic seemed 'un-expected' but there it is... They must be glad for a bit of mud on their tail when scurrying for cover!

(CI)



**Greenbrook Association Bushcare Group
have energetically attacked weeds here!**

(BCN continued from page 3)

groups is commenting on Port of Brisbane proposal to fill one of their previously adapted wetland areas as a new parking zone.

Most catchment groups are having to tackle the recent loss of adequate creek ranger support, though it appears some have had mixed experience in this regard. Revegetation is a key activity for many, and dealing with the onslaughts of weeds, pollution and development.

Whilst we cannot always attend BCN meetings, we will try and report back to the Branch so the desired connectivity becomes a reality. It can be quite encouraging, even in difficult times, to hear what others are achieving.

Given the changed political climate, we are all going to have to learn to deal with a new regime, whose priorities do not seem to include environmental concerns.

It will be our challenge to build useful relationships and get biodiversity back on the agenda; as one of the Climate Commissioners said this week 'Without it, none of us would be here!'

(Robert Standish-White)

Dates for your Diary:

Wednesday 3 October	Northern Seminars Series - Wednesday 3 October , Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, 815 Rode Road, McDowall, Finger food from 6.30 pm Presentation 7 pm to 8 pm. Join Grant Witheridge, Civil Engineer, (Catchments & Creeks Pty Ltd) will speak about our creeks' natural erosive processes and how the community can work efficiently to achieve the best environmental outcomes. See the flyer for more details. Places limited so RSVP to Jenny Leask by email by Monday 1 October.
Tuesday 16 October	Kedron Brook Catchment Branch and Network Meeting at Downfall Creek Bushland Centre, 815 Rode Rd, McDowall. Tuesday 16 October. Join us at 7.00 pm for pre-meeting drinks and nibbles. Meeting is 7.30 pm-9.30 pm. For enquiries and RSVP, please contact our secretary, Jacinta Hamilton, by email .
Sunday 14 October	Bird observation walk. The next walk is at Pony Club Bend on Sunday, 14 October, at 7.30 am from the northern end of McConaghy St., Mitchelton. (UBD Map 138 Ref L1) Note that this was a necessary transfer from the usual first Sunday of the month. Contact Jenny Ivin after 7 October on 3851 0160 for further details.



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