

CONSERVATION NEWS  
February-March 2022

February meeting may be postponed; AGM date to be advised; usually third Wednesday of the month, 1.00 pm

At: Caloundra Power Boat Club, 2 Lamerough Parade, Golden Beach or other location, to be confirmed

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Our thanks to Caloundra MP Jason Hunt and staff for their kind support in the photocopying of *Conservation News*



### From the 17 January Executive Meeting

Present on Jude's verandah were Anne, Jude, Judy, John, Paul, Sue, Jenny and Helen.

Due to COVID, the decision was made to cancel the January meeting, and possibly the February general meeting. The AGM is to be held in March, with the date and venue to be advised.

Should members have a particular interest or issue for discussion at any Executive meeting, do contact Jude for an invitation to attend.

Treasurer's reports and notes for November and December 2021 were presented and will accompany this *Conservation News* email.

### Bribie Island breakthrough

Sue Aspland has been researching the January breakthrough, sourcing scholarly papers accessible online, student theses, geomorphology studies, etc, and is working on WPSQ's behalf with TAPP to prepare a document to present to all levels of government. Sue's draft begins:

While most groups and their members have acknowledged the transient nature of a sand island, we as a combined group [community and other groups associated with the Passage are to be included] consider that the recent breakthrough and development of a new entrance and bar may have immediate and future implications for the viable and sustainable management of this waterway, coastline and island by all levels of government. Community information and consultation has up until now largely been based on the premise that 'it is natural'. Whilst this may be correct it may also be said that 'A fully informed community is a supportive community'.

At present our groups and broader community are in general lacking the science and research information and knowledge to enable them to support any proposals each level of government may have in place or propose for protecting the ecological, recreational and urban values of Bribie Island, Pumicestone Passage and surrounds.

Under a 'Conservation' heading, Sue references the Marine Park, RAMSAR Wetland and National Park statuses, and the effect of the breakthrough on Migratory Seabirds, the Water Mouse, Marine Turtles and Dugong. Her proposal also looks at infrastructure, and erosion, and urging governments to approach mitigation with adequate research and monitoring.

### Advance Dates

#### Next Branch meetings:

Due to Omicron, the February meeting is cancelled, and the AGM will be held in March; date and venue to be advised.

Clean Up Australia Day  
6 March, 8-10 am:  
at the West Terrace  
(southern) entrance to Ben  
Bennett Bushland Park  
[https://www.cleanupaustralia.org.au/fundraisers/jennifer\\_gursansky/1637807384](https://www.cleanupaustralia.org.au/fundraisers/jennifer_gursansky/1637807384)

#### Faunawatch Outings

Second Wednesday Walks,  
8 am at Maroochy Regional  
Bushland Botanic Gardens:  
9 February, 9 March.

Third Monday walks, 8 am:

21 February (possibly the  
Blackbutt Forest at Aura, but  
may yet be cancelled due to  
COVID), and 21 March (TBA).

A meeting was held with Jason Hunt (State MLA), TAPP, Night Eyes, Residents Associations and Council representatives, but as there were no state representatives present no actions were agreed.

However, requests to state departments are to include the installation (or reinstatement) of 'wave riders' that measure wave height and other information in Pumicestone Passage, and Drifters to measure current velocity.

A presentation in layman's terms for a public forum or webinar could also be a goal.

There have been a higher number of turtle nests on north Bribie this year, and fewer on Shelly Beach. Turn-arounds on Bribie have occurred due to erosion and steep access. Are the DES staff aware of nests threatened on Bribie? Sue will prepare questions for the document.

John said the government is doing little, on their premise that the breakthrough is a natural process. He considered that there may be evidence to the contrary, where dredging in the Spitfire Channel to the south-east of Bribie (to maintain the shipping channel) and use of that sand over the years for airport construction has occurred.

John Groves has aerial photos by Peter Nelson-Gracie from the 1960s, which give some historical context.

Anne suggested asking *Sunshine Coast News online* to interview Sue. Sue is taking regular photos to monitor changes to the breakthrough. The effect on canals and Lamerough Creek is another unknown at this stage.



Bribie Island breakthrough 3 January 2022. Image: Suzanne Aspland

**Purchased your copy yet?  
Elaine Green's *Piece by piece: conservation and development on the Sunshine Coast 1969-2020***

Catch up at a meeting or Faunawatch outing and buy your copy for just \$35, which covers our production costs and provides the fascinating background to the work that we and other conservation groups do to hang on to the Coast's natural places.

Can't make it to a meeting or outing? Wildlife Qld is selling Elaine's book on their website and will send you a copy. Their higher price covers postage (it's a weighty book) and a small handling charge to support the work of Head Office.

The Bookshop at Caloundra has stock: Ph: 54 91 4836) as does the native plant nursery Florabunda, and the centre at Mary Cairncross Reserve.

Or ask at your local bookshop; we are ready to stock their shelves in response to demand.



Breakthrough as at 16 January 2022. Image Suzanne Aspland



Caloundra Bar 17 January 2022, with sand spit build-up between Bulcock Beach and Happy Valley. Image Helen Kershaw

**Faunawatch report by Paul: Aura and Blackbutt Forest.**

New surveys have started for the Stockland grant, covering the Blackbutt Forest to the Frog Pond. In mid-December a dead python with the head removed was found in the open, grassed fenced-off area, 100 metres east of the Dog Park, with the cause of injury a mystery.

Aura surveys: fencing has come down around the Blackbutt Forest, with Council signs up allowing dogs on leash although this is contrary to expectations. Narelle (SCEC) is to follow up via Susie Chapman (Healthy Land & Water).

Council-funded surveys are going well. Rob Kernot will be away in February, and the Faunawatch walk in February to the Blackbutt Forest may go ahead, depending on COVID.



### **Shelly Beach to Moffat Beach Coastal Study**

There is some delay in the presentation of the Study outcomes to Council, possibly due to Bill Haddrill's move to head up the implementation of Council's Environment and Liveability Strategy, however we look forward to some actions in early 2022.

### **Sunshine Coast Council's Climate Action Declaration**

We have written and congratulated Council on their decision, looking forward to their positive plans for collaboration with the community and offering our expertise in this engagement

### **Pumicestone Passage Personal Water Craft Speed Limits**

Maritime Safety Qld has responded to community consultation and proposes some limits to jet-ski and other vessel speeds, enforceable within a few months if approved. The changes are: a reduction from 40 to 20 knots from Military Jetty to Minchinton Street, (part of the TAPP-led proposal); and a 6-knot limit in Bells Creek, which does not, however, extend beyond the lower reaches as the TAPP letter proposed. Nor has the 6-knot limit been extended to the shoreline of Bribie Island north of Bells Creek.

Invoices for new cameras for Council and Stockland surveys, paid for from the grant, were presented. Paul still has Scott's cheque from June. Rob's vehicle got bogged during an Aura survey, requiring two tow straps - putting the safety equipment to good use.

Faunawatch outings are to be advised.

### **Ben Bennett Bushland Park Caloundra Transport Corridor Upgrade:**

Council has issued an update on the project. They say it will have a minimal effect (2%) on Ben Bennett Park, however we and others consider this is only the footprint of the finished project, not the full effect. The number of lanes is still under consideration, with possible staging of the project.

WPSQ and other community members with traffic expertise met council officers and TMR officers. It was felt that TMR were listening to concerns and looking at the integration of Queen Street and Beerburum Street diversions rather than one large solution to traffic.

Prue Oswin and Friends of Ben Bennett have put together a **Ben Bennett Explorer Map for children** in these last (extended) days of the school holidays (and any time after school or on the weekends). Download a pdf to print out: <https://sidelinestraffic.com.au/community?fbclid=IwAR0OV8WIZnyl8Fxeclt7txjhJtq2MEOW7ls3GIMrXrddyBsGfQ6o3bdpEY>

*Sunshine Coast News online* interviewed Jude re CTCU and Ben Bennett Bushland Park, and this has been shared with Wildlife Qld, TAPP and FOBB.

### **Finances**

Judy tabled November and December financial reports. Sales of *Piece by piece* are going well and have covered the extra \$2000 we put in to cover publishing costs.

**Motion:** Judy moved that the Financial Reports for Nov and Dec 2021 be accepted and that the accounts for ratification or payment and transfers be approved. Seconded: Sue. Carried.

**Motion:** Jude moved that WPSQ Sunshine Coast and Hinterland Inc reimburse Helen and Elaine for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the production of the book. Seconded: John. Carried.

Jude will ask Helen for an indication of expenses.

### **Other matters**

**Maleny Wood Expo** may go ahead in May, depending on COVID, and Jude has informed the organisers that we would be interested in participating.

An updated **membership** list of 65 members has been provided by Head Office. Jude would like to check members with Helen's email list and Paul's Faunawatch list to ensure

Erica Riis, long-time WPSQ member and local historian, has just released her new work, *Mooloolah River Valley*, with John Groves' collection of images enhancing her survey of European settlement along the river.

Enquiries to Jude via the [sunshine@wildlife.org.au](mailto:sunshine@wildlife.org.au) email.

An excellent companion to *Piece by piece* is the recently launched *They made a difference: Sunshine Coast Environment Council Honorary Life Members, 40th Anniversary edition*. Elaine Green and Jillian Rossiter (both Life Members) have updated this important record of individual achievement in conservation, including that of Jill Chamberlain and Stan Tutt.

For further information, contact: [info@scec.org.au](mailto:info@scec.org.au)

no one is being missed in communications. [Don't forget to update your membership, if required, so that you can vote at the AGM; contact Wildlife Qld Head Office if you have not received a reminder from them]:

<https://wildlife.org.au/contact-head-office/?v=13b249c5dfa9>

**Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve:** Helen attended a meeting of the community consultation group in early December, with no action required at this stage.

**Naming of Sugarbag Road bike park** was listed on Council's Have your say website. Anne would like to see the history of the name recognised and information included on the sign. Anne and Jude will come up with some words.

**The Student Art Prize** is now being coordinated by Marilyn Holness. WPSQ Sunshine Coast & Hinterland is to contribute \$500, plus there are some individual member donations committed. Anne will find out more details. The Endangered species prize is to be called the Kathleen McArthur prize.

**Sea to School voyage to Antarctica** in RV *Investigator* with our member Joline has unfortunately been cancelled this year due to COVID.

Meeting closed 3.07 pm. Next meeting (to be confirmed) 21 February, 1.30 pm at Jude's house.

### The Silver Mattock Award!



Council officer Nadia Joyce awards Treasurer Judy Burns and member Glenn Burns the Silver Mattock for their years of volunteering at various BushCare sites maintained by the Petrie Creek Catchment Care group. Jill Chamberlain was the first recipient, in 2011. Full story at:

<https://oursc.com.au/council-news/bushcare-volunteers-recognised-for-their-contribution> and thanks to Sunshine Coast Council for the photo.

Glenn and Judy also made it into the *Sunshine Coast News online*, with great photos of weeding in action!

The **Brush Turkey** incubation period is recorded at 42-47 days (in Queensland), a relatively long period that may allow time for a chick's wings to fully develop, aiding dispersal and escape from predators.

Very high or very low temperatures increase embryo mortality, with male mortality higher at high temperatures, and female mortality higher at low temperatures.

Parents do not assist with hatching, which occurs up to 1 metre deep within the mound. Chicks in the same mound hatch at different times (eggs are laid at different times by the same or different females), and weigh about 80 grams. Chicks break the eggshell with legs, feet, and back, which may create a space for breathing. Unlike other bird species, the chicks do not use an 'egg tooth'.

They begin breathing after breaking through the eggshell, and rest after hatching, around 16 hours, while lungs develop full breathing function. Chicks dig upwards to the surface, lying on their back and scraping at the mound soil with their feet, maintaining space around themselves in order to breathe, and preening between bouts of digging (mud on feathers could cause hypothermia). It takes on average 40 hours, including resting time, to dig out of the mound. Chick wings at hatching are large and fully developed. Physically and behaviourally well-developed, the chicks are highly independent, solitary, do not roost communally, may congregate around food or for shelter, seek high roosts and refuges when they sense danger and appear to learn to select edible foods through trial-and-error.

At two weeks tail feathers first appear, head and neck feathers are lost, and colourful bare skin is exposed.

While we're speaking of awards, Secretary Jude Crighton has been nominated for a Sunshine Coast Australia Day Award in the Environment and Sustainability division, with winners to be announced on 22 March: we're with you, Jude!

<https://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Living-and-Community/Awards-and-Citizenship/Australia-Day-Awards/Australia-Day-Award-Nominees-2022>

And Sue Davis has been awarded an OAM for her work in arts education, including Wild/flower Women, presentations focusing on the public education work of Kathleen McArthur, which WPSQ contributed to in 2016 at Noosa Gallery and 2018 at Caloundra Regional Gallery:

<https://www.cqu.edu.au/cquninews/stories/general-category/2022-general/mixed-emotions-for-cqu-arts-educator-as-australia-day-award-honours-inspiring-career>

### Clean Up Australia Day

Thank you to Jenny Gursanscky who is again coordinating a clean-up on 6 March, 8 to 10 am at the West Terrace (southern) entrance to Ben Bennett Bushland Park in Caloundra; just come along. Details at:

<https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/fundraisers/jennifer-gursanscky/1637807384>

## Birds



Image: Ann Goth [<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2017-01-17/five-reasons-to-love-brush-turkeys/7199724>]

On observing a couple of very independent Brush Turkey chicks in her back yard at Moffat Beach, the Newsletter Editor found this excellent well-documented information online:

<https://ielc.libguides.com/sdzc/factsheets/australian-brush-turkey/reproduction>

Opposite is an edited extract. The full piece, with sources, is most informative.