

# WAMBALIMAN

The newsletter of the  
**Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland**  
**Fraser Coast Branch**



## THIS ISSUE:

- Farewell Sara
- Branch activity reports
- Nature Walk reports
- WPSQ's 60th anniversary Branch celebration
- Flying Foxes
- Frogs dying en masse
- State of Environment Report released

## WINTER 2022

### WAMBALIMAN since 1967

In the language of the Butchulla people, who are custodians of land that includes the Fraser Coast, 'wambaliman' means 'to carry', and refers to the messages that the Newsletter is communicating.



**WILDLIFE PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND**

*known informally as*

**WILDLIFE QUEENSLAND**

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**WAMBALIMAN**

e-copy in colour and hardcopy in  
black and white

Let us know if you want the e-copy  
only.

**Nature Walks**

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**Library Talks**

**Organised** by Diane Christensen

**Bookings**—FCRC website / Library

**Backyard Bioblitz**

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**Newsletter WAMBALIMAN**

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The Fraser Coast Branch of Wildlife Queensland acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and water in our region; to the east the Butchulla (Badtjala) People, and to the west, the Kabi Kabi (Gubbi Gubbi) People. We pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

# WAMBALIMAN

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### Contributions for WAMBALIMAN

We welcome contributions from WPSQ members and supporters. Articles can take the form of reports, observations of nature, anecdotes, quotes, humour and so on. Send contributions to:

[ggduckz@gmail.com](mailto:ggduckz@gmail.com)

### Submissions for the next issue are due by Friday 21 October 2022

The Editor reserves the right to withhold material from publication and to alter or correct any material which may include but not be limited to spelling, grammar or punctuation mistakes, or re-formatting to fit the space.

*Opinions expressed in Wambaliman are not necessarily those endorsed by the Wildlife Preservation Society Queensland, Fraser Coast Branch unless specifically attributed to them.*

## What's On

### Branch General Meetings

Usually - 3rd Sunday bi-monthly 2:00pm  
Halcro St Community Centre, Pialba

21 August  
18 September (AGM)  
20 November

### Executive Meetings

OCTOBER - DATE TBA

### NATURE WALKS

SUN 7 AUGUST—COLLIERY CIRCUIT  
SAT 3 SEPTEMBER—MT. URAH  
SUN 2 OCTOBER—FERGUSON SF  
SAT 5 NOVEMBER—LENTHALL'S DAM

### WILDLIFE TALKS IN THE LIBRARY 1-2PM

Hervey Bay—3rd Friday of the month  
Maryborough—last Friday of the month  
*Bookings essential—FCRC website*

#### July -

Holly West: *Fraser Coast Marine Turtles*

#### August -

Marilyn Connell: *Mary River Turtle*

#### September -

(H Bay) Marian Bennett: *Wildlife photography*

(M'boro) Ruby Rosenfield: *Wildlife photography*

#### October -

Jenna Tapley: *The Dingoes (wongari) on K'gari*

### CENTRAL BRANCHES GET-TOGETHER

Postponed until 2023

### FRASER COAST BACKYARD BIOBLITZ

Spring: 8-9 October

Don't forget to LIKE us on

[www.facebook.com/WPSQFraserCoast](http://www.facebook.com/WPSQFraserCoast)

Check out our page on

<https://wildlife.org.au/fraser-coast/>

***Farewell Sara***—Long-time Branch member Sara Gerdson is off to Brisbane to be closer to family. Sara's farewell lunch was 15 May where she was presented with a framed photograph of a butterfly taken by Ruby Rosenfield, a fellow Branch member. Pictured: centre; Sara Gerdson, right; Denise Young, back; Sol and Ruby.



Sara has made an enormous contribution to our Branch. Her three years as President saw her oversee a busy, effective Branch. We saw the hugely successful plastics campaign, the Koala counts, signage and plantings at Woocoo Park, the wrapping up of the coral bleaching project, the ramping up of the schools program, the initiation of the walks program and library talks, substantial wildlife advocacy and introduction of alternating of Branch meetings between Hervey Bay and Maryborough. Sara also hosted the 2015 Central Branches Get-together at her beautiful property on the Burrum River. I'm sure there would be a number of things I've omitted to mention.

During this time things were not always easy for Sara, with health issues for husband Ben and herself, large transits from her fairly remote property, and the usual argy-bargy you get in any community group. But Sara soldiered on, always representing our Branch with aplomb and conscientiously carrying tasks through. Her respect was widespread, both within the Branch and Head Office, and with officers at various government levels.

What is most remarkable is that Sara achieved this while not having access to the internet and emails, something that electronic communication weary people like ourselves are truly envious of.

We will miss Sara and her contributions immensely. We thank her for her leadership and support. Her influence was felt by many. On behalf of the precious wildlife of the Fraser Coast, thank you Sara. Please keep in touch. \***Peter Duck**

With all the talk of WPSQ's 60<sup>th</sup> most of you will have heard of **Judith Wright**, one of the founding members of the Society. Read about Judith. "Judith Wright, an activist poet who was ahead of her time" <https://theconversation.com/judith-wright-an-activist-poet-who-was-ahead-of-her-time-178422>

**WELCOME TO NEW BRANCH MEMBERS**  
**Theresa Paterson, Leah Matthews, Colin Furniss**

## From the Executive

It was great to see so many members involved with planning and conducting the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on 9 July at Point Vernon. We had 25 members contributing in some way, and the Executive wishes to thank you for your commitment and enthusiasm. It is greatly encouraging. We received wonderful feedback from the participants on the walks, many mentioning how grateful they were for the opportunity to listen to such knowledgeable guides.

At their July meeting, the Executive considered the Central Branches Get-together we were planning to conduct this year. There was a clear consensus from the Executive and the four members of the planning sub-committee that we should postpone this event to 2023. Because of events being run by our Branch and Upper Dawson Branch, the AGM of the State body, and the awkward timing of the school holidays, we could not have the CBGT in September or October, so we had to conduct the event by the weekend of 27-28 August. This gave us little time to finalise arrangements, despite having done some initial planning.

Of more concern to the Executive is the warning to expect a new COVID subvariant occurrence over the coming weeks that will impact at least as badly as the two earlier in the year. We already have had two executive members contract COVID in the last month. They are recovering thankfully, but it leaves a sombre message for an organisation with a generally older membership. This postponement will be disappointing, but we feel it is a prudent decision. We shouldn't feel that our efforts this year are wasted. We have come up with a decent framework which should work, along with suggested

speakers and tempting activities.

While we've been busy planning events the less fashionable business of the Branch chugs along. We have received notification that our application to seek funding from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to engage a research and development team from Griffith Uni to examine alternative proposals which can be put to Gladstone Regional Council that would negate the need to revoke any of the Conservation Park has been unsuccessful. It will be resubmitted. We have applied to the Fraser Coast Regional Council for membership on the soon to be established Mary 2 Bay Rail Trail Advisory Committee. The Batchelor of Animal Ecology Honours student our Branch is supporting, Jess Evans, is about to start her research project into the local Greater Glider populations. Our Branch's Domestic Animal Management submission has gone into Council.

Our Branch's Urban Development and Land Use Committee (BUDLUC) will be meeting soon to address some of the diabolical land developments proposed and shockingly poor condition compliance behaviour of current constructions that are causing great despondency in local Fraser Coast residents and threatening fragile ecosystems and the associated imperilled wildlife. Currently the Committee comprises President Peter, Vice President John and Vanessa. If you are interested in being involved let one of us know. The mood in the community at the moment is one of distress, and we're sure we would garner support for stepping up action against wanton destruction by greedy developers.

✿ *Peter*, on behalf of the Executive.

## WILDLIFE MATTERS from JANUARY to JUNE 2022

### THE BEACON

**February** - *Marine Turtles on the Fraser Coast incl. K'gari* by Lesley Bradley

**March** - *The History of Arkarra Wetlands* by Carol Bussey

- *Plants and Wetlands* by Tina Raveneau

- *People and Wetlands* by Merike Johnson

**April** - *Years of Research Destroyed in Floods* by Marilyn Connell

- *Platypus and Turtles in the Trees* by Tina Raveneau

- *My Recollections of Alan Peebles* by Diane Christensen

**May** - *Gastric-brooding Frog* by Ian MacKay (held over)

### TOOGOOM CHATTER & RIVER HEADS REVIEW

**December/January** - *Marine Turtles on the Fraser Coast* by Lesely Bradley

- *Wongi Waterholes* by Frank Ekin

**February** - *Plants and Wetlands* by Tina Raveneau

**April** - *My Recollections of Alan Peebles* by Diane Christensen

**May** - *Climate Change [version1]* by Carol Bussey

### MARYBOROUGH SUN

**February** - *Wetlands: Woocoo & Pricket Parks* by Frank Ekin

**March** - *Sundews* by Ruby Rosenfield

**April** - *Fauna and Flora of Fay Smith Wetlands* by Ruby Rosenfield

**May** - *Vernon State Forest Walk* by Frank Ekin

### THE OUTBACK AND CITY EXPRESS

**February – April** - *Wongi Waterholes* by Frank Ekin

### WILDLIFE MATTERS-Budding wildlife writers needed!

Members are invited to submit articles for consideration by our editorial team. For a copy of the criteria or information contact Diane or Ruby (see page 2)

The highly anticipated **State of Environment Report** was finally released 19 July (ie. made public months after it was in the hands of government).

The report is released every five years, and assesses the health of Australia's environment from the tropics to the poles.

It tells the story of drought, bushfire, and marine heatwaves, and the millions of dead wildlife left in their wake. It points to Australia's untenable rates of land clearing, of habitats destroyed and near-extinct ecosystems with no protection.

And, for the first time, the report includes Indigenous voices, who emphasise the link between Australia's delicately balanced environment and our own well-being.

Climate change, the authors write, compounds the damage from land clearing, invasive species, pollution and urban expansion. It is lengthening bushfire seasons and damaging ecosystems in ways we've never seen before.

**[‘That patch of bush is gone, and so are the birds’: a scientist reacts to the State of the Environment report](#)** by Ayesha Tulloch, Queensland University of Technology

## Branch Activity Report April—July 2022

### Meetings/ gatherings

- Executive meeting 4 June
- General meeting 19 June
- Executive meeting 17 July

### Submissions

- To FCRC's Domestic Animal Management Strategy.
- To FCRC— an Expression of interest for representation on the Mary to Bay Rail Trail Advisory Committee (MTBRTAC).

### Reports

- Vanessa wrote a report for Head Office on the Branch's activities over the last 10 years to be included in a commemorative WPSQ 60th Anniversary publication.
- Paul and Jenni wrote a report on *Walk on the Wild Side* for Head Office.

### Walks

- The May Nature Walk was held at John William's Gundiah property "The Wild"
- The June Nature Walk was through state forest at Hunter's Hut
- The July Nature Walk (scheduled for 2 July) was cancelled due to wet conditions
- Walk on the Wild Side* (3 walks) 9 July

### Library Talks

- May—Carol Bussey talking about climate change
- June—a representative from DES talking about Flying Foxes

- July—Holly West from *Turtles in Trouble* talking about the plight of our local turtles

### Winter Backyard Bioblitz

The Winter Backyard Bioblitz was conducted on the weekend of the 9-10 July. There were 16 observers making 176 observations of 122 species.

### University of the Sunshine Coast Projects

The Greater Glider project is due to begin 26 July. The project will be undertaken by Jess Evans, a Bachelor Animal Ecology (Honours) student.

### Sara Gerdson's farewell

A gathering for lunch at Salty's in Toogoom on 15 May.

### Communication

- Our **Facebook** page has 910 followers. Our post for the Flying Fox library talk reached 3,702 people. The post for the Turtle talk reached 1,756.
- Webpage** updated
- Wambaliman** Autumn 2022 was distributed late April
- Wildlife Matters** was not reported on last issue so the report for the year to date appears on page 6

### Fundraising

- please support our container deposit efforts (page 2 for code)
- weekly Beach House raffles conducted by John and Pat

### **State of Environment Report** *continued*

"The findings are staggering in their representation of loss and environmental degradation across Australia. While I am disappointed, I am unfortunately not surprised."

**[This is Australia's most important report on the environment's deteriorating health. We present its grim findings](#)** by *Emma Johnston, University of Sydney; Ian Cresswell, UNSW Sydney; Terri Janke, UNSW Sydney*

"Three chief authors of the State of the Environment Report provide its key findings. While it's a sobering read, there are a few bright spots."

Source: <https://theconversation.com/> July 19 2022

# Bundaberg Community Conservation Advisory Group

## Notes from the meeting of 28 April 2022

Chair, Greg O'Neill, welcomed newcomers to the group, including Selina Hill (Cultural Development Officer), Aleisha McDowell (Cultural Development Trainee), and Rodney Jones (Wildlife Preservation Society Queensland, Fraser Coast). Apologies included Cr Wayne Honor.

### *Minutes and Action Items from previous meeting*

Sally Obst and Greg O'Neill to liaise with Mon Repos Turtle Centre in regard to providing Neilsen Park Caravan Park with brochures advising visitors that Neilson Beach is a turtle nesting beach and how to have minimal impact when using the area.

### *Agenda Items*

Greg O'Neill-

- Terms of Reference to be established around the CCAG and meetings.
- The Natural Areas Strategy has been initiated. This will be utilised to manage Council's environmental reserves and other parcels of land that are entrusted with the Natural Areas team. Greg and Sally to provide more information about what the Natural Areas team is working on.
- Our Bundaberg Region <https://www.ourbundabergregion.com.au> is a BRC website that gives users information on Council's projects and offers the opportunity for the community to participate in surveys or other kinds of community consultation.
- The Bushfire Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan has been completed and adopted by Council. It will be available to residents on Council's website.
- All CCAG members are encouraged to recommend potential stakeholders that may be of benefit to the group. Some examples given: DES, Wildlife Care, BMRG, etc. Please email any recommendations to [parksadministration@bundaberg.qld.gov.au](mailto:parksadministration@bundaberg.qld.gov.au)

Sally Obst-

- One Million Trees project officer, Carmen Bracken, has advised that as of March they have reached the planting of 94,000 trees since the program commenced, with 191 landholders involved.
- Council has hosted two community Dune Care days at Elliott Heads since meeting in October.
- Sharon Gorge will have additional boardwalk installed in the near future.

Cr Tanya McLoughlin-

- Lot 5 SP 274161, located on the intersection of Hoffmans and Port Road, was recently considered by Energy 360 to utilise 3 hectares of land. This has been stopped. Further intentions of use for the land will be investigated.

### *General Discussion*

- Rifle Range Creek Group have planted 1,000 trees over the last 6 years, with the final 46 planted near the footbridge last week. Planting will now commence in the dune area behind the beach.



- Trees located near Coral Reef Park have been poisoned.
- Two pandanus plants located at Rifle Range Beach seem to have a disease.
- A local resident is collecting litter at Rifle Range Beach and has established a Facebook page.
- Khaki weed is present in the park at Mary Kinross/Rifle Range
- Selina recently supported Carmen with National Eucalyptus Day and the planting of eucalypts at the Bundaberg Golf Club. Some of the traditional Uncles attended also.
- Selina recently met with Tangaroa Blue to discuss marine debris, and linking to youth and elder group.
- Nick Maclean has taken up the position of Cultural Heritage Officer or PCCC. He has been there for 3 weeks.
- Lot 3 SP 174813, Murdochs Road, Moore Park Beach. Reported burnings of cleared timber. A CRM was submitted to Planning Compliance for review/discussion.
- Concern that there has been a decrease in numbers of water birds (ducks) at the lake at Moore Park near the caravan park.
- Plants that were previously planted along the esplanade have been removed.
- Archies Lookout requires more maintenance. Carpet of pandanus waste to be disposed of.
- Minor planting and weeding at Archies Beach has been undertaken and is ongoing. Grass weed at Archies Beach was reported. Sally advised that once Ian is back from leave she will get him to have a look the issue.

These CCAG Notes are intended to provide information about happenings within Bundaberg Regional Council LGA. Some items are confined to the Bundaberg region, while others are of a more general nature but potentially overlap with issues occurring in the Fraser Coast Regional Council LGA. Members of Wildlife Queensland Fraser Coast living in the FCRC LGA or elsewhere are encouraged to engage with items of interest.

Communication can be made with Greg O'Neill or Sally Obst through the Bundaberg Regional Council contacts (1300 883 699 or [ceo@bundaberg.qld.gov.au](mailto:ceo@bundaberg.qld.gov.au)).

Items to be raised at the next CCAG meeting can be forwarded to me, Rodney Jones, at [mycozip@gmail.com](mailto:mycozip@gmail.com) CCAG meetings are held quarterly, so the next meeting details will announced shortly.

✿ **Rodney Jones**

Australia's first **Great Glossy Count** presented by Birdlife Australia and the Glossy Black Conservancy took place Saturday 26 March, 2022. 406 citizen scientist volunteers collected data to support vital bushfire recovery and conservation work for the Glossy Black-cockatoo. Volunteers received training and resources to support participation. The data collected can be viewed at

<https://mailchi.mp/a27e95a24ab8/goldcoastggc22-8806969?e=3292baf62c>

## Walk on the Wild Side—Saturday 9 July



*Photos by Gillian Mackey*



*Photos by Paul Murdoch*

top left: President, Peter Duck & Cr. David Lewis, left: Butchulla elder Norm Barney, above: crowd listening to speaker Carol Bussey

More than one hundred Fraser Coast locals gathered at Blackstump Park at Gatakers Bay, Point Vernon on Saturday 9 July to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WPSQ and showcase the work of the Fraser Coast Branch.

One of the most popular and well-known of the Branch's current activities has been the successful Nature Walks program. The program features monthly walks which raise awareness of the natural environment across the Fraser Coast. Saturday's event featured three such walks, each with a different focus, and led by Branch members with extensive knowledge of the local flora and fauna. One walk was 6km, from the Pines to Gatakers Bay; the second explored the Parraweena Bushland Reserve and adjacent foreshore; and the third was the Eli Creek mangrove walk. The first and second walks were fully booked with some people missing out.

Following the walks, Butchulla Elder Norman Barney provided a Welcome to Country and shared his memories of growing up, and of the areas explored by the walks. Those attending were then addressed by longstanding Society member Carol Bussey, who outlined some of the history, highlights and successes of the Hervey Bay Branch, and its successor the Fraser Coast Branch. Carol spoke of successes in preserving important areas of bushland; campaigning to reduce the use of plastics which threaten many species of bird, fish and other marine life; and creative ways in which activities are used to raise awareness of local wildlife.

Another longstanding member, local naturalist Tina Raveneau spoke about the wonderful and varied natural areas of the region, including the migratory birdlife from across the world. Local Councillor David Lewis, whose Division covers the areas where the walks took place, also addressed the gathering.

Councillor Lewis acknowledged the long-term benefits of the Branch's work and encouraged all present to continue to educate and advocate. He drew attention to Council's Threatened Species Action Plan, and the need for more action if the plan was to achieve success.

Attendees' hearty appetites were fed courtesy of the Maryborough Rotary Club, whose very popular mobile BBQ was kept busy feeding the assembled walkers. Branch President Peter Duck

expressed the Branch's gratitude for the large turnout, predicting that "this level of interest and support shows the high level of support for our on-going work to ensure that future generations will also be able to live in and experience a vibrant environment with abundant wildlife and vegetation." "We will continue to actively campaign for Council, and Governments generally, to make decisions which preserve our natural environment." \***Paul Murdoch.**



*Parraweena Bushland Reserve circuit walk, photo by Gillian Mackey*



*Pines to Gatakers walk, photo by John H*



*on the foreshore, photo by Tina*



*Eli Creek mangrove walk, photo by Vanessa*

The event was open to the broader community and promoted extensively through local press, Council, radio, social media and so on. 25 Branch members were involved in planning and delivering on the day. Frank, Max, Marlene, Cassy, Lesley, Alice, Peter, Jenni, Vanessa, Tina and Kris organised and lead the walks. Jane B, Carol B, Tony, John W, Bruce, Val, John H, Paul, Lil, Carol H, Noel, Jackie, Diane and Pat helped in other ways. We were lucky to have a lovely sunny day and the mood was positive and cheerful, all fitting for a celebration. We are grateful to Head Office, Maryborough Garden Club, Maryborough Rotary, Cr Lewis and Norm Barney for their support. \*

## The Wild—walk (and Max's camp out) on the 7 May

The weather forecast was of doom and gloom, but we decided to take things as they came and drove from Hervey Bay, arriving in sunny weather at GUNDIAH about 11.45am. Friday. We lunched at Gundy Pub after inspecting the damage from the most recent



flooding of the area, caused by local rain. The Pub which is on a rise ended up with about 4ft of water in the bar area. The accommodation between the Pub and the roadway was flooded up to wardrobe height (where the floor is at about 3ft). John told us that the river peaked at 22m and parts of his property were 4ft under water. The publican and his wife with staff help had cleaned, dried and disinfected the whole area and buildings. One caravan was lost.

Almost directly opposite the Pub is Emery's Bridge Road which crosses the Mary River. We took that road for about 5km to the bridge, and then after 1km we turned off to the left onto Ramsey's Rd, a gravel road which is part of the National Trail, taking us to John Williams' property.

We proceeded to our campsite where we set up camp with beautiful views over the Mary River from 'the cocktail lounge' where we were served a variety of nibbles and red wine before adjourning to the 'dining room' for a huge serve of spag' bog....delicious and washed down by the remains of the bottle (we had thrown the cork away).

We retired after a short music session and while I don't know about Dave, I spent the night 'cutting timber'. Great night's sleep with minor rain shower.

Slow to get going and were just finishing breakfast at 8:05am when John arrived to

look for us -'the natives were at the parking area and getting restless'. We hot footed it over there just as the last person signed on and we were off on the trail. Essentially the walk began with a challenging climb up a sandstone escarpment following a watercourse. The challenging part of it was not the climb up nor was it the water, it was the slippery patches caused by mud and algae. After some slips and falls we were informed that this was the also the route back to camp, so it was with some trepidation that the walk proceeded ever upwards toward a distant ridge from where we could follow another ridge to our left, up towards the crest at about 170m above sea level. Basically this section comprised numerous opportunities for spectacular views over the valley towards the Mary River. We proceeded through open woodland interspersed with a rocky escarpment. Several huge rocks were noted to have fallen from the heights, so we walked very quietly.

Characteristic plant species and other botanical highlights include *Callitris endlicheri*, *Angophora leiocarpa*, Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and a

mintbush (*Prostanthera* sp). Lower down are a few rainforest species, even a few palms. As for wildlife, there are lots of birds, and a few scratch marks on trees characteristic of our nocturnal animals.

The walk up to the summit was fascinating as we could view the next valley across and I was most impressed at the tree and understorey growth that had occurred since my last visit about 3 yrs ago when we could clearly see a piggery which is now not visible.

We summited at a grassy knob where there was a perfect log seat at just the right length and height for all to sit and

have morning tea. John was sitting at the far end and idly noticed that there were a lot of bees around his legs. Thankfully these were native stingless bees and were working on their hive through a crack in the log. Proceeding along the crest we found ourselves above a rocky escarpment with clear views. We gradually descended into the original valley where the pace of the walk slowed as the photographers took shots of the various tiny flowers along

the wayside. Eventually we got back to the stony gully where John tells us that his neighbour's wife and associated females sit in the rocky pools and drink chilled champagne on a hot summer day; there was no sign of them!

We proceeded downwards watching our footsteps and handholds VERY carefully and there was only one minor fall. It is amazing how many prickly bushes grow just where we wanted to grab and hang on.

Eventually we struggled through head high dense grass and "POP"! there we were back on the National Trail and almost home.

Everyone was anticipating lunch, but John had one final surprise for us....a stroll through an overgrown vine patch and down a gully assisted by a rope to pull ourselves up through a dry watercourse and abseil down. Another loud "POP" and were at our lunch spot next to the cars.

An excellent and varied walk through an interesting environment and one sort of hopes that John is unable to sell it.

✿ *Max Hunter*



## Hunter's Hut—walk on the 5 July



Photos: Peter Duck



Perfect weather for the start of winter. A cloudless sky and a cheering sun in a forest thriving following recent heavy rains was the scene of the June walk.

Despite the obscure gateway off the Biggenden Rd into Hunter's Hut Forest, a lot of people found it before the walks team had erected their totem pole directing to the gateway. The first few muddy metres and then a water hazard was no discouragement to CJ nor a low-slung Mini Cooper. Thereafter the forest paths were excellent for vehicles.

For most eyes the first sight of The HUNTER'S HUT is a view of a barren grassless area with a scattering of dead trees with a background of a derelict and overgrown stockyard. But, to the eyes and curiosity of Max, HUNTER'S HUT was a treasure. Max gave a history of the local railway, the stockyard, and the fact that the grassless area had had its topsoil removed for the convenience of trucks. Max encouraged the more curious of us to have a detailed inspection of the antique stockyard.

This was our group's introduction to industrial archaeology.

Max then led us off on a well-maintained forest track through some magnificent old trees and two well vegetated gullies. The first significant stop was where the walks team on its first two reconnoitres had missed the vital left turn. Not to be thwarted a third time, they had left a yellow blaze on a very old tolerant and splendid Queensland Blue Gum. On the reccys, this first 1.3km took 16 minutes, but on this occasion, it took 47 minutes, such was the interest shown by the 32 walkers.

The pace sped up as we entered the single file track through the magnificent, selectively logged mixed forest. Max found a shaded area with seating of fallen logs for morning tea. As the walk resumed the chatter and giggle index registered a pleasing height. There was a sharp spike in the index when the track was blocked by 10 well fed and possessive looking cattle which gave way to the larger herd of walkers.

Having traversed the 3.1km forest track we joined the final 1.1km forest road, crossing two small and well vegetated creeks back to the stockyard.

It was pleasing that the botanists found plenty to discuss. This year's wet, following last year's dry weather favoured the diverse fungi blooms which intrigued

several of the walkers. Bird diversity was small, but birding was not favoured by the disturbance of our presence upon the usual peaceful forest.

This was a new walk and introduced us to another area of former logging that has enjoyed great rejuvenation.

✿ *Frank Ekin*

## Colliery Circuit—walk *to be held 7 August*

So often we drive from Hervey Bay to Maryborough passing by Dundathu and are merely aware of the Churchill Mines Road to the right, otherwise the road is largely ignored. Even at Freedom Park in Pialba we may notice the old chamfer board buildings but rarely give thought that they are the remnants of the former Pialba Railway Station. These two sites are points on the former Urangan Pier to Maryborough Railway Line.

Recently, a member of the Bicycle Users Group of Hervey Bay and Maryborough introduced the Nature Walks team to a walking circuit off the Churchill Mines Road. The first section of the circuit is along the former railway line, then continuing, the circuit bounds former coal mines and joins up with the remains of railway sidings.

The walk is replete with wonderful environmental treasures. Firstly, there is the extensive forest regrowth of the past 50 years; even the mounds of tailings support significant regrowth. Regrettably, there is a downside in that there are swathes of exuberant weed cover, similar to that which has taken over so much of the Bruce Highway on the Gunalda Range and the central reservation on the new highway South of Gympie.

This Colliery Circuit cuts across some of the Susan River Catchment. The recent rain has demonstrated how the catchment works with a tendency to form rivulets with natural vegetation slowing flow and inhibiting erosion.

The railway embankment is a great engineering feat, but at the same time, it obstructs the natural water runoff. Catchment water accumulates on the upper side of the embankment to pour through the engineered culverts in the rail embankment to erode out on the lower discharge side, gouging out large ponds and puddles.

The Colliery Circuit exhibits dry sclerophyll forest and paperbark stands. There are examples of permanent and ephemeral wetlands. There is natural regrowth; some vigorous; some weak. While regrowth of native plants is great, there is also regrowth of weeds. The area is worthy of greater study.

The objectives of the WPSQ and the existence of these former coal mines and rail lines are an excellent stimulus for discussion and reflection on conservation and preservation of the natural habitat integrated with an industrial past.

✿ *Frank Ekin*



## Tammy, Marlene and Tracey go to Carnarvon Gorge

The adventure team of Tracey, Tammy and I tackled the challenging 87km Carnarvon Gorge Great Walk, carrying backpacks of food and winter clothes for 6 days along with tents and everything needed for winter camping.

Day one was through the Gorge to the Big Bend walkers camp, stopping to see the moss garden and indigenous cave paintings along the way.

Next day we stumbled along the boulder-lined Boowinda Gorge, then faced the vertical climb out. We ascended over 600m in 4km to Battleship Spur. We lunched with amazing views. The light was fading as we finally made camp.

Woohoo, woke to emus strutting through the camp-site. Then plenty of ups and steep downs and some off track, finishing with a suspension bridge to camp. Fortunately Tammy had an App to get us back on track as the route markers disappeared. Caravans shared this campground.

Such a heavy dew when we woke. We left late attempting to dry our tents. Our longest day (17.3km) found fertile basalt soils supporting Silvertop Stringybark, Sydney Blue Gums and macrozamia. Camp this night or the next had no toilet. Water was got from underground tanks with a hand pump.

The nights were warming slightly and so were the days. The male kangaroos were active with their 'coughing' noises getting me out of my tent to investigate.

Day 5 was a pleasant walk as we stripped off the layers and felt the sun. We made it to our final camp early and had time to play cards. Worryingly the new battery in my insulin pump failed after 18 hours.

Our last day was tense. My gas cylinder was empty but Tammy's metho stove allowed for hot black breakfast tea and coffee. High blood sugar numbers as we set off and they remained high all day, so nothing to eat. Lovely scenery but I was super glad to descend the many steps and wearily trudge to the car. Batteries found, shower and fresh food enjoyed. Not wanting another dehydrated meal for a while.

We saw lots of birds, some emu poo with the cycad seeds intact and huge brumby poo piles on the last days. We saw no pigs but plenty of evidence and too often walked on their tracks away from the safety of the triangle markers. Suggestions to improve this Great Walk - put in toilets at last two camps, add more route markers, and set up a pig reduction program.

✿ *Marlene Luce*



# Backyard Bioblitz Winter 2022



**About**

Discover the wonderful diversity of native plants and animals in the Fraser Coast and Wide Bay region and/or your own backyard during the Winter Backyard Bioblitz on the weekend of 9-10 July 2022.

This is part of a series of seasonal Backyard Bioblitzes coordinated by the Wildlife.

[Read More >](#)

[Project Journal](#)



White-faced Heron and soldier crabs by vanessaegavins

The Branch's Winter Backyard Bioblitz took place on the weekend of 9-10 July. There were 16 observers who made 176 observations of 122 species. Thanks for organising Vanessa!

The Bioblitz is open to the whole community. While we call it 'Backyard' Bioblitz it is up to you where you choose to take your photographs/recordings. The whole Wide Bay region is our 'Backyard'.



Double-barred Finch by nmain

The link to the project is <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fraser-coast-backyard-bioblitz-winter-2022>

If you want to participate and want to get started with the know-how contact Vanessa. (see page 2)



Dusky Wood-swallow by andreamvee



White-spotted Swift Spider by scottgavins



fungi & moss by gympietina



Laughing Kookaburra by rejen



Coral fungi by gympietina



Coastal Banksia by rubyrosenfield

## Library Talk, June —FLYING FOXES

If you knew nothing about flying foxes, the USC lecture theatre was the place to be for a recent comprehensive presentation on these amazing animals. Certainly, the talk and visuals were much clearer in the environs of the lecture theatre instead of the little room usually allocated in the library.

Chris Heckathorn from the Department of Environment and Science recounted many experiences from his work in wildlife management and education, having worked for three years on crocodile management in Townsville; another three years as park and dingo ranger on K'gari; and for the past two years in the Wide Bay area as a drone officer.

Both microbats and flying foxes inhabit various habitats in the Wide Bay area.

Micro bats have the extraordinary ability to hunt for their food via echolocation, sending sound waves from the nose or mouth. These waves bounce off various objects and give a particular resonance for insects, their primary source of food, enabling them to hone in on their prey.

Flying foxes on the other hand have excellent vision and sense of smell, allowing them to travel long distances (sometimes up to 500km in a night) to find fruit, blossom and nectar sources, their main diet. Flying foxes are sometimes called megabats or fruit bats. Some species of megabats can have a wing span up to 1.5m and weight of 1.6kg.



All bats carry their young for up to 3-4 months, leaving babies at the colony roost. They learn to fly at about 3 months of age. They are dependent on their mother's milk for the first 3-6 months. Mothers have an average of one

offspring each year. Different species of bats synchronise their breeding pattern to ensure good provision of food throughout the year in their regular habitat.

All bats have more than 30 different types of call/song, similar to whales.

They have an average social congregation pattern of 50 individuals in the colony for a period of 10-20 days depending on ambient environment and food supply. The exception is during breeding, when colonies camp for 60 days or longer.

Locally, Tooan Tooan Creek is host to the Little Red Flying Fox. These bats can colonise at the rate of 20,000 or more in one colony. The larger Black Flying Fox and the Grey-headed Flying Fox are also in the Wide Bay area.

The males of all species mark their colony boundaries by scent markings and colonies may be all males or both males and females.

Very large colonies tend to defoliate the forest canopy over long periods of time but an advantage is that this allows sunlight to penetrate the forest base where saplings are growing. Flying foxes are essential forest pollinators.

All bats are food for snakes, goannas, crocodiles and other reptiles, and the White-bellied Sea Eagles.

Chris discussed the dangers of handling bats, advising they be left untouched if on the ground and injured but monitored until wildlife rescue / advice is actioned (RSPCA / local wildlife rescue groups). If a bat has to be handled, always wear leather gloves as they have sharp claws and will bite.

All bats carry viruses much the same as humans. If they are carrying lyssavirus

there is danger of infection from their saliva. If you are scratched or bitten by a bat, seek medical treatment as soon as possible.

If you have horses on your property, good advice for minimising infection by hendra virus is to fence trees where bats roost, preventing horses grazing around tree bases. Hendra virus becomes dangerous to humans when it is passed from horse to humans.

Avoid eating fruit that has been nibbled by bats if possible. \***Jackie Henrion**

### **Australian frogs are dying en masse again, and we need your help to find out why**

<https://theconversation.com/australian-frogs-are-dying-en-masse-again-and-we-need-your-help-to-find-out-why-184255> Published: June 13, 2022

Last year the call went out for volunteers to report sick or dying frogs. 1600 responded reporting thousands of dead frogs of 40 species including threatened species such as the Green and Golden Bell Frog (*Litoria aurea*) and the Giant Barred Frog (*Mixophyes iteratus*). “The true death count and full list of species impacted is likely to be orders of magnitude higher.”



Universities, government biosecurity and environment agencies have been working together to understand just what caused frogs to die last winter. How did the volunteers help here? In New South Wales alone, more than 350 people froze dead frogs for collection.

Testing has revealed the amphibian chytrid fungus is certainly involved in this mass death event; most dead frogs testing positive for the pathogen. But it is uncertain if the fungus is acting alone, or even the primary cause of death. Testing continues for an array of other pathogens, toxins and other potential stressors.

#### Why should we care?

Australia has 247 known species of native frog, 40 of which are threatened with extinction, and at least four species are already extinct.

The impacts on Australia's frog species from such large scale deaths are unknown, but scientific

surveys of frogs, combined with large scale citizen science data, are underway.

Frogs are often extremely abundant, and play an important role in the flow of energy and nutrients, and in food webs. In places where amphibians have declined, the impacts are noticeable, with ripple effects across entire ecosystems as animals that rely on frogs for food start to disappear too.

#### Scientists need your help this winter

Please send any reports of sick or dead frogs to the Australian Museum's citizen science project FrogID via [calls@frogid.net.au](mailto:calls@frogid.net.au).



The objectives of Wildlife Queensland are to:

- (1) preserve the fauna and flora of Australia by all lawful means;
- (2) educate by all means possible all sections of the community, particularly the young, in understanding the principles of conservation and preservation of the natural environment;
- (3) discourage by all legal means possible the destruction, exploitation or unnecessary development of any part of the natural environment;
- (4) encourage rational land use and proper planning of development and use of the natural environment and management thereof.

### Want to join Wildlife Queensland?

<https://wildlife.org.au/shop/membership/membership-3/>

\$30 Individual

\$45 Family / non-profit group

\$20 Concession

\$12.50 Youth

*Once you have joined Wildlife Queensland you may elect to be assigned a Branch such as Fraser Coast.*

Wildlife Queensland and its branches are not wildlife rescue or care organizations.

However, we thank you for caring for our wildlife and

if you wish to report sick, injured or orphaned wildlife contact:

RSPCA Qld on 1300 ANIMAL or preferably contact a local rescue service.

Our local services have the expertise and will eliminate delays in taking action.

**WILDLIFE RESCUE FRASER COAST** contact through Facebook page

**ANARRA** (Gympie region) Phone 5484 9111

**WILDCARE** (operates from Pomona) Phone 54272444

**For snakes HERVEY BAY SNAKE CATCHERS** Phone 0476 226 747

**TURTLES IN TROUBLE FRASER COAST** Phone 0493 242 903

**For marine strandings ring the QLD Government Wildlife Hotline 1300 130 372**

### Branch logo and shirt options

• *The original colour and design chosen was a “Bizcool” – all acrylic – Wasabi coloured polo \$24 and an extra \$6 if you want a pocket. (from Morgans)*

**Other options include:**

• *“Claremont” 95% cotton shirt in apple green is available from BullAnt Designs in Pialba - \$30 with the logo.*

• *get the logo on any shirt for \$9.50 at Morgans Sewing & Embroidery in Pialba.*

**Branch shirt for sale: brand new, size 14 \$20 Ph. 0418 884 917**