

CONSERVATION NEWS
Feb-March 2023

February meetings:

Executive: TBA

**AGM: Wednesday 15
February, 1 pm** at Kawana
Library Meeting Room,
Nanyima Street, Buddina

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photocopying of
Conservation News



Our 60th year & the AGM

This year is the Branch's 60th. Could this be the year that you participate in the work of the Executive or as an active member? Could you help maintain our momentum as the Coast's strong advocate for wildlife habitat with your ability to get a message across, knowledge of the natural world and a little spare time?

Kathleen McArthur founded the Caloundra Branch in 1963 and she and other excellent leaders and supporters ran the big conservation campaigns of that development-driven era into the new century. The work continues, and so does the need for workers.

The nomination forms for the 2023 AGM are included in the mail-out of this *Conservation News*. Our Secretary, the admirable Jude, would be happy to have a chat if you have questions about any tasks. Current membership is required for nominations and voting, so please check with WQ Head Office if you are unsure of your financial membership status.

Constitutional reforms via WQ Head Office into the future may see changes to the fairly rigid make-up of our executive, but even now there are opportunities for members to contribute in an ad hoc manner, especially useful in a year when we'll celebrate our 60th, host the State AGM and Southern Branches Get-Together, participate in (fingers crossed) COVID-free public events, and again run Wildflower Walks.

Following the AGM we'll pool ideas for future directions and connections and have a go at getting some ideas off the ground.

From the January Meeting

Expanding community engagement

Developing relationships with students at USC is a difficult proposal in that the new teaching model is online and largely off-campus, with environment staff often disbursed to off-site campuses or institutions. Member Quentin spoke of his experience of good engagement with ecology staff re issues at Pt Cartwright, and the value of a centrally placed meeting venue. Concerns were expressed re parking costs and availability. Robyn considered working with schools a good option despite Blue Card requirements, and new member Julia has kindly offered to review our online presence, taking on our old Facebook page and possibly an Instagram account.

Advance Dates

Monday 13 February, time and place TBA: Executive meeting

Wednesday 15 February: 1 pm, AGM, Kawana Library Meeting room, Nanyima Street, Buddina

Sunday 5 March:
Clean Up Australia Day, 8-10 am Ben Bennett Bushland Park southern entrance (registration details this page)

Faunawatch Outings

Second Wednesday of the Month Walks, 8 am at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens: 8 February, 8 March, 12 April, 10 May, 14 June

Fourth Monday of the Month walks, 8 am:

Monday 27 February: Ben Bennett Bushland Park, Caloundra, Queen Street entrance, 300 m west of Caloundra State High School.

One of the most easterly conservation areas on the Sunshine Coast with a mix of eucalypt and melaleuca forests giving refuge to a variety of species within an urban environment.

Monday 27 March: Upper Coochin Creek Environmental Reserve, corner of Caralan Way and Emma Place, next to Caralan Way Park.

Sunshine Coast Council's FOGO waste roll-out

WPSQ supports Council's proposed Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) waste collection, but has concerns for the apparent stalling of the roll-out, and commitment to it. This has spurred member Claire to draft a letter to Council, approved and added to by the Executive, urging action and suggesting also that the Coast's status as a Biosphere and Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency be additional drivers. The demise of Red Cycle recycling of soft plastics could also lead to allowing *bagged* soft plastics to be placed in current yellow-lid recycling bins, as occurs in other states. Caloundra City Council had a long history of resource recovery, and it would be good to build on this reputation.

Ben Bennett Bushland Park/Caloundra Transport Corridor Upgrade (CTCU)

The TMR Stakeholder Interest Group (SIG) has been selected and includes representatives from WPSQ, Value Caloundra, Caloundra Residents Association, Active Transport proponents, representatives of seniors' and aged care residents' interests, and others including local businesses. It appears that proxies will not be allowed (this will be raised again by representatives) and that sharing of documents from the meetings within interest groups is also not allowed. The CTCU itself is non-negotiable, with TMR willing to look at options for their area of responsibility – the section of the corridor from the Nicklin Way to Third Avenue, including the power lines. For the state, money (or its lack of) may be a driver in reducing lanes to two. At the first meeting, unfortunately via Zoom due to the facilitator's staff having COVID, Jude pressed for the management and monitoring of runoff from the proposed roadway to maintain water quality in Ben Bennett Park and subsequently Pumicestone Passage, which receives flows from the park via overland and piped infrastructure. Options are to be finalised by March 2023 and design by December; construction commences 2024 and completion is due in 2025. Before the next meeting of the SIG on 20 February Jude will contact TMR re the completion of the Environment Impact Statement.

2023 State AGM and Southern Branches Get-together, 9 September

The State Recreation Centre at Currimundi has been booked, and funds are available from Head Office as well as their administrative assistance.

Clean Up Australia Day

Member Jenny has again kindly organised a two-hour session at Ben Bennett Bushland Park, at the West Terrace (southern) entrance. To register, click on 'Join this site' at: <https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/fundraisers/JenniferGursansky/1670465795>

Reaching from Tower Hill to the west, along Upper Coochin Creek to the Beerwah High School bushlands and train tracks to the east, this remnant riparian zone can produce over 55 species of birds.

Monday 24 April:
Emu Mountain, Coolum, at the end of Havana Road East (access off David Low Way) next to Coolum State School.

This is a really good walk through coastal wallum in the Noosa National Park, and if we don't see a Peregrine Falcon then we should at least see some endemic flora.

Monday 22 May:
Koala Park Rosemount, meeting in the car park at 123 Panorama Drive, Rosemount

We'll try our luck again for a koala in this 16-ha park on the eastern side of Nambour.

Richmond Birdwing Butterflies

Past Councillor Andrew Champion has been in touch with Friends of Ben Bennett via the Facebook page run by member Jenny about planting Birdwing butterfly food vines in the Caloundra area, following the winning entry in the Biosphere photo competition of the butterflies at Pt Cartwright. Matt Cecil from WQ and the RBCNetwork could provide advice.

Jenny received favourable responses from reputable

Bribie Island breakthrough

Member Robyn has reported that the exposure of asbestos pieces along the Onslow foreshore at Golden Beach has improved conditions for the migratory and other shorebirds on nearby sandbanks and beach, in that beachgoers and their dogs are now excluded from this section. Locals consider the source to be an historical dumping of demolished building materials at the site. The recent breaching of the sandbank extending from the northern end of the new bar has also restricted public access to North Bribie Island.

Any action on dredging remains in a waiting pattern. Access by the public via swimming and boating from Happy Valley to north Bribie expanded dramatically over the holidays, with rescues required, and the unfortunate and tragic death of a young woman.

Sunshine Coast Council's officer responsible for the Shorebirds program has reported informally that Council can enforce dog-control on beaches at low tide, but not on sandbanks, where responsibility lies with federal and state authorities, including Qld Parks & Wildlife Service. They are also aware that Council's policy on shorebird protection needs to be extended to rocky foreshores.

In January several members attended the opening of a lovely exhibition of Shorebird paintings by Merrett Keech at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens. The artist's talk was followed by one on the Coast's migratory shorebirds.

Shelly Moffat update

We have heard that the report will be presented to participating interest groups in late February.

Inter-Urban Break/Green Belt

WPSQ will support a coalition of local groups to raise public awareness of the importance of preserving the green belt from inappropriate development, and determining appropriate uses within the belt. Committee Member John, Take Action for Pumicestone Passage and SCEC have been active in making this matter a priority for 2023 (see <https://takeactionpumicestonepassage.com.au/project/inter-urban-break/>). To this end TAPP and SCEC will convene a meeting in mid-February.

Drones and birds

WQ Head Office will be contacted re any existing or developing policy or guidelines associated with the impact of drones on wildlife. There are no drone guidelines on the Queensland Wader Study Group website.

WildHeART Student Art Prize 2022

The coordinator for the 2023 competition and exhibition is Carina Robertson from Friends of Mary Cairncross. WPSQ will continue its financial and other support.

citizen science sources Qld Plant ID and the iNaturalist site, and encouragement that planting vines could be successful in Ben Bennett's rainforest area in attracting the butterfly. We will contact Council later in the year re potential planting in suitable sites in the Park and elsewhere in the cooler months.

Weeds never sleep: weeding opportunities in 2023

Join a BushCare group near you, including the new **Roving groups** being set up by Council to cover – in the Caloundra area – Sharon Bonney, Ben Bennett, Jill Chamberlain reserves and more. Check out the Council's BushCare website.

Here are some monthly sessions closest to southern-based residents, most commencing at 8 am, with weeding and planting for a couple of hours followed by a welcome morning tea and chat:

Currimundi (Kathleen McArthur) Conservation Reserve: 1st Wednesday (run by National Parks & Wildlife)

Watson Environment Park (Shelly Beach): 1st Friday

Golden Beach Foreshore: 2nd Thursday

Tooway Lake: 2nd Friday

Shelly Beach Foreshore: last Saturday.

Treasurer's Report

Judy reported that finances are in good order, ready for the auditor. Elaine's *Piece by piece* is selling well, with nearly half of the print run netting funds of more than \$7000. Member Jo's beautiful felted wildlife creatures have found ready sales, with proceeds kindly donated to the branch, and The Bookshop at Caloundra has passed on \$900 from the sales of Kathleen McArthur's wildflower cards and our publication *Walks in Caloundra*, which we regularly supply. We have contributed \$200 to the Environment Defenders Organisation appeal.

TMR proposal to provide 4-lane access to Bribie Island

Have your say by 27 February:

<https://www.yoursay-projects.tmr.qld.gov.au/bribie-island-bridge> or search 'Bribie Island Bridge have your say'

Faunawatch

Multiple visits have been made to Land for Wildlife properties, and part of the Council Community partnerships funds have gone to the purchase of 12 new cameras and batteries, allowing three cameras per property for surveillance. A progress report to Council is due at the end of February, and Paul is waiting on the outcome of the acquittal of the Stockland Baringa survey grant.

Faunawatch walks: See **Advance Dates**.

Kathleen McArthur Lunch Hour Theatre Podcast

New podcasts are being launched each week by the Sunshine Coast Heritage Library, with one of the latest including her comments on Council's constant tidying up of nature – anathema to Kathleen and a topic on which she was very vocal:

<https://shows.acast.com/kathleen-mcarthurs-lunch-hour-theatre-scripts-podcast>

or wherever you get your podcasts.

Young home-schooled Spencer Hitchens (of TV fame) has produced an excellent calendar of photos (mostly his) of **Glossy Black Cockatoos** that he has come to recognise as individuals. These inhabit threatened habitat at Sunrise Beach. To purchase a calendar and support his campaign contact:

savesunriseglossies@gmail.com

Visit **Healthy Land & Water** for the 2022 report cards for our local and other SE-Qld catchments, with waterways significantly muddier than last year due to flood events and poor land management:

[https://reportcard.hlw.org.au/results?currentYear=2022&show=null&action=null®ions\[0\]=region.Maroochy&tab=overview](https://reportcard.hlw.org.au/results?currentYear=2022&show=null&action=null®ions[0]=region.Maroochy&tab=overview)

Enquiries to
sunshine@wildlife.org.au

Sales of Elaine Green's
*Piece by piece:
conservation and
development on the
Sunshine Coast 1969-2020*
continue through the State
Library bookshop,
Berkelouw's in Eumundi,
Book Nook at Montville, The
Bookshop in Caloundra, as
well as native plant
nurseries at Mooloolah River
Landcare, Florabunda,
Coolum Native Plants, and at
Mary Cairncross Reserve.

State Library has also
ordered extra stock for a
local history symposium in
February, and a copy has
recently been donated to
the USC Library.

Antarctic Bottom Water

Joline Lalime, a member and much-appreciated minder of our earlier Facebook page, is now the **Sea2SchoolAU Education Coordinator** on the Antarctic Expedition investigating **Antarctic Bottom Water Production in the Past: Records from Marine Sediments off Cape Darnley, East Antarctica from the 16th January – 12th March 2023.**

'This project will provide the first long-term geoscience datasets from the Cape Darnley region for understanding past changes in the formation of the globally important Antarctic Bottom Water (AABW). This region was recently established as one of only four regions around the Antarctic margin to produce AABW, an important part of the ocean thermohaline circulation and regulator of global climate. Recent increases in global temperatures and ice melt have led to a decline in the formation of AABW over recent decades. Understanding changes in AABW production, associated forcing mechanisms, and export pathways is significant for predicting future oceanographic and climatic change, and potential impacts to local marine ecosystems. The geological record can provide insight into the links between AABW production, ocean warming, and ice sheet instability, to inform our understanding of the impacts of future climate change in the Antarctic region. To date, no sediment cores have been collected that provide records of past changes in AABW production off Cape Darnley during periods warmer than present.'

Follow the Expedition through several Social Media Links including:

CANYONS VOYAGE

https://www.facebook.com/CANYONS_voyage-101536709021903/

SEA2SCHOOLAU

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100075998599606>

or Twitter, TikTok and PodCast (search #canyons_voyage or #sea2schoolau)

Birds with Phil Bender

White-faced Heron

(*Egretta novaehollandiae*)

Able to live in a variety of habitats the lovely White-faced Heron is well known by serious birders and casual observers alike. Around the beaches, estuaries, farms and even suburbs it hunts for crabs, lizards, insects, fish and allows a much closer approach than other heron species. It is a solitary nesting bird, often building the large twiggy platform nest well away from water. Up to seven but usually four pale blue eggs are laid; incubation is about three and a half weeks and the young fledge in about six weeks. This is a delightful bird, common but always a pleasure to observe.

