

WAMBALIMAN

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



THIS ISSUE:

- Branch activities
- Walk and Talk reports
- Nature notes
- **Great Sandy Strait Marine Park Zoning Plan finally out**
- **Plans for the October 2023 Central Branches Get-Together**

WINTER 2023

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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Code: C10192159

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Library Talks

Organised by Diane Christensen

Bookings—FCRC website / Library

Backyard Bioblitz

The committee—Vanessa Elwell-Gavins,
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Bundaberg CCAG (contact Rodney Jones)

Fraser Coast EAG rep Paul Murdoch

Rail Trail Advisory Group John W / Tina R

USC Partnership

Vanessa Elwell-Gavins, Rodney Jones,
Bruce Dick, Cassy Ironside

Newsletter WAMBALIMAN

Publisher: WPSQ Fraser Coast Branch

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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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WAMBALIMAN

e-copy in colour
hardcopy in black and white
Let us know if you want the e-copy only.

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

Submissions for the next issue are due by Friday 20 October 2023

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
**19 February, 16 April,
18 June, 20 August,
17 September (AGM), 19 November**

Executive Meetings

Next one after AGM

WILDLIFE NATURE WALKS (SEE PAGE 4)

6 AUG - Mt Benarige (and national trail)
2 SEPT- Wildflowers in Poona NP
1 OCT - Geology around Point Vernon
4 NOV - Pir'ri Reserve

LIBRARY WILDLIFE TALKS (SEE PAGE 4)

21 JULY—Kangaroos *postponed*
18 & 25 August—Whales
15 & 29 September —Birds of Arkarra
20 & 27 October—Brumbies of K'gari - tbc
17 & 24 November—Turtle Nesting

National Tree Day Sunday 30 July
•FCRC tree planting
•Screening of the film "The Giants"

State AGM Saturday 9 September

Branch AGM Sunday 17 September

FRASER COAST BACKYARD BIOBLITZ
Spring
weekend 14th /15th October

CENTRAL BRANCHES GET-TOGETHER

13th – 15th October 2023 (firm)

Don't forget to LIKE us on

www.facebook.com/WPSQFraserCoast

Check out our page on

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

From the editor....

This issue is so full there is no room for me to write. Please support our activities where you can. Our AGM is in September. Why not commit to just 12 months on our Exec. The Central Branches Get-Together will be a great weekend of learning, sharing and friendship. You can attend all, some, or one of the events. Hope to see you there. ❀**Jenni**

Our Branch is committed to protecting wildlife throughout the Fraser Coast region. It is particularly gratifying to see wildlife flourishing in urban areas. A few members were lucky to be invited to the home of a Kawangun resident to observe his resident Sugar Gliders. A bonus was also catching a glimpse of a healthy Brushtail Possum and a camera-shy Southern Boobook Owl. Thanks to John Hampson for the pic.❀



Library Talks for the rest of 2023

~~**July 21: Eastern Grey Kangaroos**—Nuala McClellan *postponed*~~

Maryborough Library 10am to 12noon

Hervey Bay Discovery Centre 1pm to 2pm

August 18 & 25: An Introduction to Whales of Hervey Bay.—Marian Bennett

August 18— Hervey Bay Discovery Centre 1pm to 2pm

August 25—Maryborough Library 1pm to 2pm

September 15 & 29: Birds of Arkarra—Ruby Rosenfield presenting Belinda Rafton's photos

September 15—Hervey Bay Discovery Centre 1pm to 2pm

September 29—Maryborough Library 1pm to 2pm

October 20 & 27: K'gari Brumbies. TBC

November 17 & 24—Turtle Nesting. Don and Lesley Bradley

November 17—Hervey Bay Library (if available) 1pm to 2pm

November 24—Maryborough Library 1pm to 2pm

Wildlife Nature Walks calendar—for the rest of 2023

AUGUST Sun 6th: Mt Benarige (and a section of the National Trail)

SEPTEMBER Sat 2nd: Wildflowers in Poona National Park

OCTOBER Sun 1st: Point Vernon - geology

NOVEMBER Sat 4th: Pir'ri Reserve, Booral Road.

Branch Activity Report April - July 2023

on the Takura walk



Meetings/ gatherings

- General meeting 16 April
- Executive Meeting 21 May
- General Meeting 18 June
- No Executive meeting in July

Grant Application

- Jane Gray prepared our application “Koalas forever: targeted science + equipped communities” for funds from the Federal Government’s Saving Koalas Fund

Advisory Groups

- John Williams attended the Mary to Bay Rail Trail Advisory Signage Working Group on Thursday 13 June

Library Talks

Hervey Bay Library

April 21: *Fraser Coast Birds*

Speaker - Ruby Rosenfield

May 19: *Animal and Human Conflict*

Speaker - Chris Heckathorn

June 16: *Mangroves at Tandora*

Speaker - Lindsay Titmarsh

Maryborough Library

April 28: *Animal and Human Conflict*

June 30: *Mangroves at Tandora*

Walks

- 6 May: Takura Environmental Reserve
- 4 June: Clifton Creek
- 1 July: Colliery Circuit

Winter Backyard Bioblitz

- Weekend 8-9 July - See some of the photos on our Facebook page

Uni Partnerships

Eastern Grey Kangaroo Project

- Saturday 24 June:
Workshop by Nuala McLernon and Dr Beth Brunton at USC campus
- Sunday 25 June:
EGK Community Survey

Communication

- Our Facebook page has reached 1131 followers (30 new followers in last four weeks).
- Wambaliman Autumn 2023 was distributed electronically on April 18 and printed copies posted soon after
- Articles: *Wildlife Matters*

Toogoom Chatter & River Heads Review

May: *Is that a Carbon Credit I See*
by David Arthur

June: *Takura Environmental Park*
by Frank Ekin

July: *Zoom the Platypus*
by Diane Christensen

The Mary Sun

May: *Denison State Forest* by Frank Ekin

June: *The Broad-shelled Turtle*
by Marlene Luce

July: *The Colliery Walk* by Frank Ekin

Fundraising - Please support our container deposit efforts. (page 2 for code)

We currently have 73 financial memberships which includes 2 groups and 9 families. This equates to 80 (adult) members and 2 affiliated groups.

NATIONAL TREE DAY PLANTING—local planting

Connect with nature and join FCRC Natural Environment Team for a fun-filled morning getting your hands dirty.

Where: 2023 National Tree Planting Site, Central Road, Tinana (vacant Council block near corner of Central Road and Gympie Road)

Date: Sunday, 30 July 2023

Time: 8am–11am

Click on the link below to register your interest in attending: [Register your interest!](#)



The Australian Parents for Climate Action Fraser Coast and our Branch are bringing [The Giants](#) to Hervey Bay for National Tree Day on July 30th.

This film explores the intertwined fates of trees and humans in a poetic portrait of environmentalist Bob Brown and the forest.

You can view the trailer [here](#).

Bookings can be made here—<https://fan-force.com/screenings/the-giants-big-screen-hervey-bay/>

Please contact Bianca Sands if you have any questions. Ph:0422 911 477

Southern Branches Get-Together (SBGT) and WPSQ Annual General Meeting

The 2023 Southern Branches Get-Together and Wildlife Queensland Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 9 September 2023.

This year's event is hosted by the Sunshine Coast and Hinterland Branch who will be celebrating their very own 60th anniversary this year.

Please join us on the beautiful Sunshine Coast for a day of connecting and learning – and the opportunity for a leisurely walk through the nearby Kathleen McArthur park. The venue is the Sunshine Coast Recreation Centre, 80 Currimundi Rd, Currimundi 4551.

Bookings can be made online via our website –wildlife.org.au- or phone Head Office on 3844 0129.

Central Branches Get-Together (CBGT) Hosted by our Branch—13-15 October see page 12 for details

Bundaberg Regional Council's

Community Conservation Advisory Group (CCAG)

CCAG is hosted by the Bundaberg Regional Council. The Group, which meets quarterly, is convened by BRC staff member Greg O'Neill (Operational Supervisor, Natural Resource Management), with Cr Tanya McLoughlin (Waste & Recycling) and Cr Wayne Honor (Parks & Gardens) also attending. Most meetings have other representative BRC staff attending, often as an introduction to new relevant staff or Council initiatives. The remainder of the approximately 10 attendees represent a range of conservation interests.

Since early 2021, I've been attending CCAG meetings as a representative for the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland, Fraser Coast Branch. Recent developments in BRC administration re Group representation have allowed me to shift my formal representation from WPSQ to Birdlife Bundaberg. As there are several other attendees of the CCAG who are also members of WPSQ, this shift is certainly not leaving WPSQ unrepresented. In fact, I will still be tabling any items from members of WPSQ Fraser Coast, and will continue to write an article from the CCAG meetings for inclusion in the quarterly WPSQ newsletter *Wambaliman*.

So, in the role of Birdlife Bundaberg representative on the CCAG, I invite you to make use of this opportunity by forwarding to me information on any bird-related issues that you think could be advanced through this process.

The next meeting of CCAG will be held on Thursday 20 July. Items to be tabled at that meeting should be forwarded to me at mycozip@gmail.com

✿ **Rodney Jones**, Co-convenor, Birdlife Bundaberg

Fight to save Gatakers

As reported in recent issues of *Wambaliman*, action to overturn the grant of a provisional Commercial Hotel Licence to a developer on the site of the former small restaurant at Gatakers Landing is continuing through the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

A date for the full hearing of the case has yet to be allocated by QCAT. A compulsory conference, involving all parties including the developer and the Commissioner of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (who issued the licence in December 2022), was scheduled to be held in early May but had to be adjourned. A Directions Hearing is now scheduled for 31 July. Decisions about what witnesses, possible new evidence and arguments will be allowed at the hearing will be made by the Tribunal at that hearing.

An application lodged under the *Right to Information Act* made to Fraser Coast Regional Council has now been finalised, with some very interesting and/or important documents now available to the Branch. The documentation has con-

firmed that at no stage since the earliest recorded town planning decision on this environmentally sensitive Crown Land site (made in 1984), has any environmental study or environmental impact assessment ever been required by either Council or the State Government (responsible for Crown Lands).

One (unrelated) piece of good news for endangered marine turtles (both loggerhead and green turtles) at risk from the hotel development is the State Government's announcement in late June of \$1.23 million funding to University of the Sunshine Coast to help establish the Fraser Coast Marine Turtle Rehabilitation and Research Centre in Hervey Bay. It is ironic that one of the 'partner' organisations revealed in new Environment Minister Leanne Linard's media release is the Fraser Coast Regional Council – the very organisation which has facilitated the hotel development by granting an exemption from having to apply for planning approval and undertake an environmental impact assessment. The Minister's media release actually identifies boat strikes and habitat disruption as threats facing marine turtles, both of which will occur and/or increase if the approved hotel is allowed to proceed!! ***Paul Murdoch**

Great Sandy Strait Marine Park Zoning Plan—announced 13 July

The recent release of the new Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan is welcome news. The State Government has largely listened to the feedback received through the lengthy consultation period.

Responses were received through online surveys, written submission and prepared form letters, totalling 6580 responses. The form letters prepared by the Australian Marine Conservation Society outnumbered the form letters of the Queensland Seafood Industry Association by a ratio of four to one.

In the online survey 63% agreed with the proposed increase of the Marine National Park (green) zones from 3.9 to 12.8% of the park, 79% agreed with proposed new or expanded Conservation Park (yellow) zones and 75% agreed with proposed new or expanded Habitat Protection (dark blue) zone.

Our Branch was part of an alliance of thirty conservation groups (and a few local tourist operators) that made a considerable joint submission which was coordinated by AMCS Queensland.

Other local groups (Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council, Friends of the Burrum River Systems Group and Lower Mary River Land and Catchment Care Group) were similarly involved. A number of members of our Branch made individual submissions or completed the online survey.

This majority response has meant we now have a vastly improved Zoning Plan. The new zoning plan will more than triple the level of fully protected 'green zones' from less than 4% to nearly 13% (in these areas no extractive activities are permitted). More green zones throughout the marine park will now protect a wider

range of habitats, including seagrass meadows which are critical for dugongs and turtles. The new zoning plan will also ban destructive gillnetting in 'Conservation Park' zones, protecting wildlife and rebuilding fish populations.

Some welcome changes that have occurred in the waters adjacent to the Fraser Coast Region are:

- Three designated No Anchoring Areas will be established at Platypus Bay, Gattakers Bay and Gables Point (Point Vernon)
- Beam trawling from the lower Mary River will be prohibited
- Commercial fishing with large mesh gill nets and ring nets will be banned from the proposed Habitat Protection (dark blue) zones at Dayman Spit and in the Cherwell River and upper reaches of the Burrum River
- Seasonal Shorebird Closure Areas will be introduced that prohibit access at the high tide roost sites at Moon Point, Boonooroo, and Maaroom at certain times of the year (Sep/Oct and Mar/Apr)



Waders at Maaroom by Craig Whittaker

There remains some aspects of the review where the State Government appears to have yielded to the pressure brought by the sustained campaign of strategic distortion by the commercial fishing industry. Commercial set pocket netting within the Conservation Park (yellow) zones of the Mary River will be allowed to continue. Commercial tunnel netting within Conservation Park (yellow) zones in the Great Sandy Strait will also be allowed to continue. Their reasoning for allowing these non-conforming uses is to maintain a supply of locally caught seafood for human consumption.

You can view and download the Great Sandy Strait Marine Park Community Summary and the more comprehensive Decision Regulatory Impact Statement including all the maps via the following links –

<https://www.qld.gov.au/.../401114/gsmc-community-summary.pdf>

<https://www.qld.gov.au/.../pdf.../0012/401115/gsmc-dr-is.pdf>

✳️ *Peter Duck*

FRASER COAST BACKYARD BIOBLITZ WINTER 2023



About

Members 3

We welcome everyone in our community to participate in our WINTER 2023 Fraser Coast Backyard Bioblitz. This is part of a series of seasonal Backyard Bioblitzes coordinated by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland Fraser Coast Branch.

[Read More >](#)

Project Journal

Fraser Coast Branch held its quarterly Backyard Bioblitz for Winter 2023 on the weekend of 8-9 July. The conditions were 'perfect' for winter: sunny, crisply clear, dry and reasonably cool, with mostly only light winds.

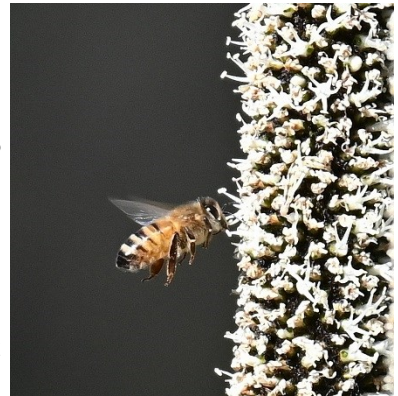
As of 13 July, 346 observations had been logged by 28 observers, with 231 species observed. Scott Gavins again recorded the most observations, with some 61 observations of 42 species, followed by Tony van Kampen with 53 observations of 51 species. There was a wide variety of species spotted, including many plants, fungi, birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. The most commonly observed species was the beautiful Rainbow Lorikeet.

My own observations were rather more modest this time, in line with seasonal conditions. There were some interesting ones among mine though, including:

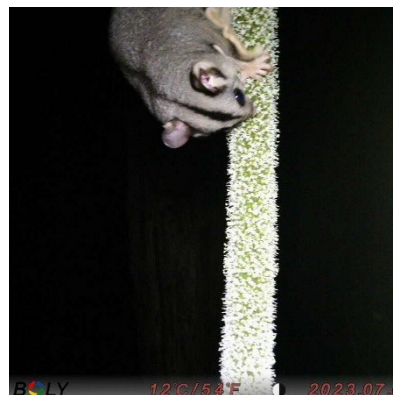
- a young and slender Common Tree Snake
- Green algae along Dundowran Beach. This algae normally appears between September and December with none occurring in the last two years. I observed it first this year early in the first week of July, nearly two months earlier than my previous earliest sighting.
- A Pacific Baza, the first time I have seen one in my bit of coastal reserve.

Other interesting observations included a great variety of birds and Scott Gavins' Wrist-winged Glider, feeding on the spike of a grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea latifolia*).

✿ **Vanessa Elwell-Gavins**



Above: European Honey Bee feeding on a Xanthorrhoea flower by andreamvee. Below: Also feeding from a Xanthorrhoea flower is a glider by scottwgavins.



University of the Sunshine Coast Honours student grants update



Fraser Coast Branch has given two grants to the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) to help Honours students complete two research projects.

The first project, looking at the **presence of Greater Glider habitat** across our region, is being conducted by Jess Evans and was originally due for completion at the end of June. USC has recently granted Jess an extension of her project until the end of August 2023.

The second project, investigating the **Eastern Grey Kangaroo population** in urban and peri-urban areas of the Fraser Coast and the impact of development, land clearing and habitat fragmentation, is being conducted by Nuala McClernon. Nuala held a workshop in Hervey Bay, with her supervisor, Dr Beth Brunton, on the afternoon of Saturday, 24 June, attended by about 30 people. Some interesting tidbits from the workshop included:

- Eastern Grey Kangaroos are readily adaptable to different ecosystems. Any significant decline in their numbers (which is happening across many parts of south-east Queensland) is an indicator that things are seriously wrong. Other less adaptable species are likely to be in greater trouble than EGK.
- Eastern Grey Kangaroos live approximately 15 years and a mature female is likely to rear about seven joeys over her life.

Sunshine Coast Regional Council has a Macropod Conservation Plan. Sounds like a very good idea!

Sunday 25 June was designated as the day for a community survey of the location and size of our local Fraser Coast Eastern Grey Kangaroo population. From dawn I surveyed the land previously cleared between Ansons Rd and Grinsteeds Rd in Dundowran Beach for about an hour and saw three groups, of between 3 and 7 kangas - significantly fewer than the population prior to clearing in March 2019. The fog that morning meant that conditions were very favourable for observing the kangas. Another member saw none in the area he surveyed near his home in Urraween.

Nuala had received some 86 emails with data within 24 hours of the survey. It will be interesting to find out the results and see her recommendations.

✿ **Vanessa Elwell-Gavins** (photo, kangaroos in Parraweena Park, Point Vernon)

Central Branches Get-Together (CBGT) Hosted by our Branch—13-15 October

The expectation is building with this year's CBGT less than three months away. The last CBGT was hosted by Upper Dawson Branch in Theodore pre-Covid in 2019. The successful 60th Celebration Event last year took the steam out of our plans to have the CBGT on the Fraser Coast last year. At the May Executive Meeting the Executive resolved to have this year's CBGT in October rather than August. One reason was because of a wish to make a feature of the arrival of the migratory wading birds. Another reason was that August is peak season for visitors to the Fraser Coast with most accommodation already booked out.

The almost finalised program shows a weekend packed with opportunities to meet, discuss, learn, and have a good time. You may wish to absorb yourself for the whole weekend, or just pick a part (or parts) that interest you. Most activities are free of charge, but there are some optional activities involving cost, like the Sunset Tour with Hervey Bay Eco Marine Tours and the Saturday night meal.

We have booked the Sea Scout Hall on the foreshore at Torquay for the three days. It will be the venue for a number of activities, but will also provide a meeting reference and a base for safe storage of materials, and it will also mean displays can be left set up and information (and a cuppa) made available. The organising committee will be looking for willing helpers to be available with some tasks, like food preparation, hall set up and cleaning and providing the hospitality always accorded at these events. If anyone is able to offer a billet for visiting participants just let us know.

One important feature of the weekend will be Branch Reports and the formulation of CBGT resolutions for Head Office (Saturday afternoon). The resolutions are put up by the Branches for discussion and voted on. Generally, they involve proposals for improving the state organisation, or they may involve a regional issue we are seeking State Council to follow up at the state level. This historically provides opportunity for spirited and productive debate.



Past CBGT have provided memorable experiences for attendees, and we have seen lasting friendships forged. So, circle the weekend on your calendar, or type in the dates on your google calendar.

***Peter, Jenni and
the Executive**

**Central Branches Get-Together (CBGT)
Hosted by our Branch—13-15 October**

Central Branches Get-Together (CBGT) 2023 DRAFT PROGRAM 14/15 October

Venue: Sea Scout Hall, Torquay (Hervey Bay)

When: weekend plus Friday night before and Monday following (optional)

Tides: Oct Sat – high (3.42m) 8.16am / low (0.82m) 2.29pm / Sun – high (3.49m) 8.46am / low (0.85m) 3.04pm

Accommodation: caravan parks / various motels and B&B / home (own expense)

Friday night

5.00pm on - meet Sea Scout Hall, Torquay.

5.30pm - beach walk, sunset (5.54pm), watch bat fly-out.

6.30 pizza (pre ordered), sweet, tea and coffee. (FC Branch expense)

Speaker – Don Bradley “Shorebirds” and maybe film “Flyways”

Supper (FC Expense)

Saturday morning

8.30am for 9.00am start - meet Sea Scout Hall, Torquay.

Speaker - Tina Raveneau “Nature of the Fraser Coast”

Speaker - Tony van Kampen “Plants of the Fraser Coast” including seasonal bioblitz and aphitonia.com

short walk on foreshore or boardwalk (700m to start)

Saturday Lunch 12.00pm

12.00 lunch back at Scout Hall (FC Branch expense)

Saturday Afternoon

1.00-3.00pm Branch reports / general issues for HO.

Late afternoon – choice of 2 activities (both optional)

Sunset Tour on the Milbi (HB Eco Marine Tours) 5.00-6.30pm - \$85 (own expense)
or Urangan Pier walk and Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens

Dinner start 6.30-7.00pm

At Torquay Hotel, 500m from Hall (own expense)

Sunday morning 9.00am - choice of 2 excursions

Waders roosting at O’Regan Creek - about 1km of beach walking Toogoom
or Mungomery Vine Forest – easy walk, beach walk optional, part wheelchair friendly.

Sunday Morning Tea 11.00 am

Meet at Arkarra Tea Gardens for coffee, (own expense)

Walk around lagoon and wetlands (signage and seat - contributions by Branch)

Sunday Lunch 1.00pm

Meet back Sea Scout Hall for lunch (Branch expense) and afternoon activities.

After Lunch Activities

Mid-Low tide activity - Mangroves at Eli Creek or Parraweena - Eli Point - Gatakers

Takura Environmental Reserve—Nature Walk 6th May

A superb sunny morning lit up the myriad green hues at Takura Environmental Park for the May outing. After welcoming the 23 walkers, guest speaker John Abbott gave a history of his time raising Clydesdale horses on the property before it was bought by the Fraser Coast Regional Council. Large tracts of the property have original rainforest.

John Abbott has a long history of horse breeding. He is a significant expert as evidenced by breeding prize winning Clydesdale horses. Like so many pursuits, Clydesdale horse shows are intense affairs, and followed with enormous commitment by a surprising number of enthusiasts. By happenstance, the neighbouring property to Takura Environmental Park had a Clydesdale mare which gave John the opportunity to describe more about these magnificent beasts.

Marlene led the walk off through a former meadow. Although rife with weeds, it is habitat for a wide range of seed eating small birds such as Double-barred and Red-browed Finches, Cisticolas and Tawny Grassbirds. The dense undergrowth is a favoured habitat for birds such as quails.

The walkers soon entered the large rainforest area where Council has constructed a graded walking track. The group spread out as interest in plant life captured everyone's attention. The vines entangling mature trees caused so many surprising formations. Marlene pointed out vines encircled trees predominantly clockwise but less commonly anticlockwise. The astonishing size of

some of the Bloodwood and Ironbark trees gives an impression of how native forests used to appear before the timber for housing led to near total deforestation.

Within the rainforest section of the Park are several educational signs. These are aimed at introducing the general public to the wonders and mysteries of the rainforest. The author and the artist involved in designing and producing these notices did a wonderful job. A couple of our walks team were so enthusiastic about the signs that they had brought water and cloths to clean them in preparation for the walk.

There have been several surveys of the Park by the Birdwatchers of Hervey Bay. Remarkably, 105 species have been identified in a short time. This diversity varies with seasons. Some species are resident, others transient visitors and others temporary migrants.

There are several plant habitats: open sun exposed areas, wild regrowth of former meadow, rainforest margins (with sun exposure), dense rainforest (with reduced sun exposure). Furthermore, there are ground cover plants, and mid and upper storey plant habitats. To date 100 plant species have been identified by a local botany group, predominately in sun exposed understorey forest margins. There is a huge number of plants yet to be documented.

Such was the interest in all the features on this walk it took hours longer than planned. But still, the giggle and chatter index was high indicating a very rewarding walk. **Frank Ekin*



From the Fraser Coast Regional Council's website.....

The **Takura Environmental Reserve** contains the last patch of remnant rainforest in Takura. In addition to rainforest, however, patches of vine thickets and woodlands comprised of eucalypt species can be seen throughout.

Purchased by the Stocks family in 1944 for the purpose of farming sugar cane and pineapples, the land also contained stands of Kauri pine (*Agathis robusta*) which were felled to build houses on this land, as well as other land owned by the Stocks family in Rockhampton. Only half the land was utilised for farming, with the majority of the other half remaining untouched.

In 1995 the land was sold to the Chorny family, who ran a Clydesdale horse stud. Grazing took place in the cleared paddocks, which allowed the vegetated areas to grow and regenerate. In 2020, the property was purchased by Fraser Coast Regional Council to protect the important ecological values of the land, and to help educate the community about environmental processes.

This reserve covers a total of 56.49 hectares and contains a vast array of plants and animals. A trail cam project undertaken by Council revealed the presence of the Vulnerable Black-breasted Button-quail (*Turnix melanogaster*), as well as the Noisy Pitta (*Pitta versicolor*). A host of other species such as the Short-beaked echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*), Swamp wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*), Lace monitor (*Varanus varius*) and Common brushtail possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) are also found throughout the reserve.

The Takura Environmental Reserve is located at 42 Barnett Road, Takura, with parking available at the top of the driveway. Access to the walking track is adjacent to the welcome sign. Total track length within the reserve is 2.4kms.✿

Clifton Creek Right Road - Nature Walk 4th June

Beguiled by many days of glorious Queensland winter weather, expectations ran high for the June walk. Forgive the pun, but spirits were dampened when we set off from Hervey Bay, southwards into deep leaden skies and scattered light showers heading for Brooweena.

We picked up Marlene at Woocoo Hall. Her exuberant enthusiasm was what was needed. In the rain, she helped attach the splendid big WPSQ direction arrows to trees and gateways to help those unfamiliar with Woocoo National Park and Clifton Creek Right Road.

Christine and Leanne first led us to this wonderful site. 5 reconnoitres later, with various combinations of Pat, Carol, Max, Christine, Alice, Noel, Marlene and Frank, this walk was well explored and held many points of interest.

John welcomed the walkers on behalf of the WPSQ. Max's history of European settlement in the area, 1848, the rail link from Mungar to Monto 1889 to 2008, and forestry with sawmills from 1924 to 1988 was recounted. As an aside to researching this relevant history was the unintended drive through Gigoomgan cattle property as Max sought to find the Smith's Memorial Bridge on Gigoomgan Road and to better understand the recent history of this area, formerly all encompassed by the name Teebar.

The first 2.8 kms of the shared short and long routes were along a forest road bounded by vineforest on one side and mixed eucalypt with rainforest on the other side. The route ascended and

descended along spurs and crossed a couple of fords. The creek gullies were heavily vegetated and some hidden stretches of still water lent superb subjects for photographers.

The botanists meandered along muttering incomprehensible names of plants. The birdos sauntered, gazing skywards, seeking birds in high foliage. Those intent on spirited walking had finished their morning tea before the botanists and birdos arrived at the idyllic picnic spot where the short and long walks parted.

The short walk then followed the well vegetated creek bank back to the meeting point. The long walk ascended a substantial hill and followed the undulating crest. It passed through the clear-felled Hoop Pine forest. Weather permitting, superb views of other mountain ridges can be seen. The long walk looped round the former Hoop Pine forest down to the creek gully with vine forest; a birding paradise.

The extensive vineforest in the gullies was largely untouched. But, away from the gullies much of the area had been cleared of vegetation in the 1970-80s for Hoop Pine plantation. In the clear-felled area was very tall Hoop Pine regrowth and extensive opportunistic vegetation invasion. Comparing the different habitats; vineforest, eucalypt forest and the logged area was very instructive. Even the clear-felled logged area was habitat to *Cisticola*, Red-browed Finch and Variegated Fairy-wren adding to the 27 species identified. ✿

Frank Ekin

Off to Mt Benarige for a reccy yields much more.....

Even the best laid plans may come to nought, but there again, a change in plans can lead to greater pleasures (and successes). And so it was that a small troupe of walkers met on 9 July on Thinoomba Road in St Mary State Forest to do a reconnoiter of the track to the base and then the ascent of Mt Benarige in preparation for the walk on Sunday 6 August.

The five walkers were delighted to encounter four happy bird spotters in the lower reaches of the ascent. But, as so often is the case, the person with utterly no interest in birds was the person who spotted and pointed out the most exciting bird of the day; a **Southern Boobook Owl**.

Counter to the adage luck favours those best prepared, a first time bird photographer, Helen Cory, got the photograph; not just of the day, but probably of the season!

Following the reconnoiter, we can promise a very attractive and easy walk on the approach to Benarige, on Sunday 6th August but cannot promise a sighting of a Boobook Owl. ***Frank**



Our Nature Walks Committee love organising the walks which have become one of WPSQ FC's most popular activities. Running since 2014 we aim to:

- Promote the objectives of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Qld.
- Enjoy healthy activities in natural surroundings and make new friends.
- Explore some of the amazing unspoiled natural areas in our region.

We alternate between Saturday and Sundays—to accommodate those who may have a regular commitment on either one of these days.

We try to alternate between easy and not quite so easy walks, and close and more distant destinations.

Our dedicated committee members keep looking for new places to visit, and this year we have three new walks in March, April and June

HARSH REALITY

If all humankind were to disappear, the world would regenerate back to the rich state of equilibrium that existed 10,000 years ago.

If insects were to vanish, the environment would collapse into chaos.

Quote from E.O Wilson. (submitted by Jackie)

Colliery Circuit - Nature Walk 1st July



Remnants of the rail bridges that were built through the wetlands remain along the The Mary to Bay Rail Trail (walking / bicycles / horses). The Colliery Circuit starts at the Susan River bridge (left) and follows the trail for a short distance before following side branches of the rail to and from the mine sites.

As so often is the case, a cold July morning heralded a sunny, clear blue sky of a Queensland winter's day. Eight cars were already parked at the Susan River bridge before the Walks Team had set up their displays and sign-on table. Despite the cold and the 45-minute wait until the official welcome and acknowledgement of country the chatter level was high as walkers greeted each other and recounted recent adventures.

Max gave a precis of the coal discovery and mining in this region. He reminded us that, in coal mining terms, the story began some 300 million years ago. Following the retreat of the last Ice Age, followed by high rainfall, dense forests of seed ferns grew prolifically, attaining 40 metres in height. With the passage of geological time these forests gave way to geological changes resulting in their burial and their formation to coal. At present, it is not readily known if First Nations people had found or indeed used coal. However, within a few dec-

ades of European settlement in Australia, coal was found and exploited. So, it is since the 1860s that coal has played a major role in the modern economic development of this region.

Our Branch has taken advantage of the intense work of Bob Webley, who, using his surveying skills, inclination to explore and to study the local history, has located former railway sidings serving the former Dunstan, Globe, and Churchill mines. Bob defined sensitive and environmentally appropriate trails to join up these former mines and to locate various industrial artifacts – and so the trail is called “Colliery Circuit”.

A well-practised Marlene led the 29 walkers off on this fascinating walk pointing out the remnants of the mines, many of which were swallowed up by natural vegetation regrowth but revealed by Bob. Some of the concrete footings of buildings and gantries remain giving some idea of the extent and the size of the former mining workings.



There are areas of dense, blady grass, which are sometimes associated with an excessive fire regime. Other areas of lantana and opportunistic plants were suggestive of disturbed top soil and removal of native vegetation. One of the curiosities is an area characterised by hundreds of small hill-ocks resulting from dumped mining spoil now covered in vines and weeds. Tree cover varies greatly. In some areas there are fairly widely spaced Iron-bark and Bloodwoods with sparse ground cover, suggestive of the appearance had the area been managed by The First Nation peoples. A stand of healthy, mature Blue Gums is indicative of an area of rich soil.

Wallabies were spotted, but no kangaroos, and a healthy lace monitor. Bird sightings were limited but 13 species were identified by song. The commonest bird song was that of the Spotted Pardalote outdoing the expected winter visitor, the Grey Fantail, and the resident White-throated Treecreeper.

The Colliery Circuit is a fascinating walk from many points of view. It illustrates the links from 300 million years ago, through the era of the First Nations Peoples and to the 200-year history of European settlement. The challenge now is how best to preserve the fauna and flora and educate one on the principles of preservation of the natural environment, such that there is rational land use and proper planning of the natural environment. The efforts of Bob Webley, The Bicycle Users Group, and the Maryborough to Bay Rail Trail advisory group are worthy steps in this direction. **★Frank Ekin with photos by Helen Cory**



Banksia robur

Monarch Butterfly caterpillar

Acacia leiocalyx

Animal and Human Conflict—May Library talk

Chris Heckathorn presented a talk on animal and human behaviour conflict.

Chris is a Wildlife Officer with Southern Wildlife Operations for the Department of Environment and Science (DES). In the past, he worked as a Park Ranger on K'gari for 3 years. His current role includes drone surveillance including compliance enforcement, regulations and penalties.

First up was the all important emphasis on reptile and human interaction and behaviour, focusing on the usual safety measures and keeping in mind that 71% of the 140 species of snakes found in Queensland are venomous to varying degrees. It is always important to be observant when in their environment and to adopt all safety and first aid procedures.

There was a brief discussion around safe practice when in the vicinity of Masked Lapwings and Australian Magpies during their breeding season (July to November). Males protect their young and will attack for a period of 6-8 weeks while the chicks mature and it is advisable to seek alternate routes if walking/cycling, or, carry an umbrella.

Chris highlighted the usual precautions and safety measures to take when in flying fox and bat territory. Much of his work involves essential mapping and monitoring of their habitat to enable warnings to humans and subsequent court proceedings and so on in the event of habitat destruction requiring intervention and compliance procedures. Consequent legislative action is one of the many functions of DES.

Many regional councils have a statement of management intent (SOMI) for flying fox and bat roosting behaviour within the human community. Fraser Coast Regional Council policy is non intervention.

In the case of kangaroos, aggressive behaviour toward humans is often an end result of their past experience of humans' aggressive behaviour towards them. They are very protective of their young. If persistently approached and attacked by kangaroos, Chris advises to adopt an echidna pose, curled up face down on the ground (if no barriers are present) and they will eventually go away.

Crocodiles are generally not seen in the Wide Bay area, but crocodiles observed south of the Boyne River (no matter what size or behaviour) are targeted for removal. A large crocodile was caught in the Mary River in 2013 and another in 2014.

Examples of threats to marine life include: human rubbish, irresponsible fishing practices, coastal building development, poor water quality, climate change impact, coral reef bleaching. Any marine animal entangled in a fishing line should be gently pulled from the water to assess damage and to remove the hook and line from the animal before returning it to the water. Never just cut the line.

Chris identified many animal/human behavioural clashes and corrective amelioration. It was a great effort and very informative. **✿ Jackie Henrion**



Life in the Mangroves at Tandora—June Library talk

Lindsay Titmarsh presented excellent photographic representations of mangrove species growing on and near his coastal property of Tandora. Tandora, situated on the Mary River, includes a vast array of tidal foreshore and islands.

In recent years, Lindsay has spent more time studying and recording mangrove and other flora species at the property, with the added tool of a drone for photographic research.

Mangroves grow in bands of different species defined by and dependent on their elevation above the water mark. Each species will grow at a specific elevation and have a different breathing mechanism. One mangrove tree can even send roots to 38 metres in a radius from the base of the tree.

The drone photography admirably demonstrated these bands and close up photography indicated the foliage types and colour effects of different salt ridding mechanisms of different species of mangrove.

These trees grow for up to 900 years, and root systems are preserved by the salt in the ocean. The aerial roots poking from the ground must spend approximately 50% of their life out of the water where they breathe.

In any mangrove grove or patch, the original trees of the species are virtually

vertical in growth but as they drop their seed and spread from the central trees, the trees adopt a more angled growth to take in some sunlight. Lindsay has had ancient root wood of mangrove and melaleuca found on his property carbon dated. Result estimates were at 7,000-8,000 years old.

Lindsay's photographic collection included the Yellow Mangrove (*Ceriops australis*) and the Blind-your-eye Mangrove (*Excoecaria agallocha*) so called because of its toxic milky sap, often inadvertently rubbed in human eyes. Different species have different types of seed pods. Yellow mangrove has spear pods which drop into the mud vertically to germinate. The smooth cylindrical propagule can float for 3-4 months before settling and seeding. Blind-your-eye (or Milky) Mangrove grow fleshy green capsules of 3 lobes, each lobe bearing a seed which is released from the opening pod. These seeds are buoyant and will float to find suitable germination sites.

Fauna photography included water mice, mangrove and fiddler crabs, blue jelly fish, crocodiles and wild pigs.

Due to less fresh water in the Mary River compared with the past, Lindsay estimates there is now more mangrove growth. ***Jackie Henrion**

Nature Notes

October-November 2022 Southern Queensland Beach Stone-curlew survey.

Volunteers surveyed about 90 km of coast at 50 locations, and found 27 birds, with new locations being searched between Bundaberg and Hervey Bay in particular. The first survey in March 2022 found around 20 Beach Stone-curlews from 67 km and 31 locations, so the results are similar.

This species is widespread but not numerous in southern Queensland. There may be hard-to-reach pockets of less disturbed habitat with higher numbers, but we'll need to investigate further to find this out.

Areas of concern include Bribie Island and the Gold Coast, although even places like Yeppoon seem to have a much lower breeding success than offshore refuges such as nearby North Keppel Island where young were found this past season.

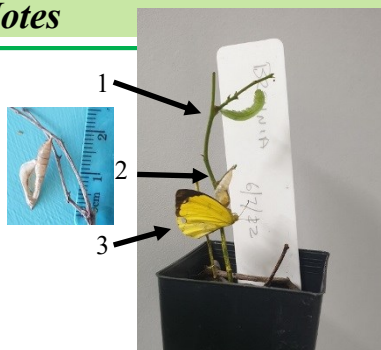
Thanks for participating or coming to one of the workshops, and also thanks to those who are keeping tabs on their Beach Stone-curlews, and don't hesitate to ask any questions!

Our next steps will be briefing councils on our results and important areas for these birds.

This project is funded by the Queensland Government's Citizen Science Grants.

✿**Simon Kennedy**, Wetland and Coastal Birds Co-ordinator, Queensland

Simon was guest speaker at our 2022 AGM. From that some of our Branch members were able to participate in the survey.



Community Nursery Manager Jim Johnston loves to see biodiversity. He never balks at chewed or tatty leaves; he sees it as providing food for something. When a tray of 40 *Breynia oblongifolia* tubes was stripped completely it was obvious who the culprit was. In fact we were lucky enough to see the adult **Large Grass-yellow** butterfly (3) emerging from the chrysalis (2) and a mature caterpillar (1), suspended by the cremaster ready to form a chrysalis.

Learn how to help our most vulnerable beach-nesting birds at <https://birdlife.org.au/beach>

SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND BEACH STONE-CURLEW COUNT 2022

Surveyed between October 31st and November 6th of 2022. Together, we recorded:

27 Beach Stone-curlews	112 Pair Stone-curlews
6 Lucky Double-curlews	238 Rich island flocks

80 kilometres of beach covered

Thank you to those who contributed to our 2022 Beach Stone-curlew counts for Southern Queensland!

37 volunteers surveyed at 50 locations

YOUR WORK IS PART OF A BIGGER EFFORT!

38% of dogs observed were off-lead

THREATS TO THE BEACH STONE-CURLEW

Our beach-nesting birds face a huge number of threats. Threat data is highly important and we ask that you collect this information with every survey! The major threats assessed in these counts were:

- Dogs off-lead
- Vehicles on beaches
- Jetties
- Fences
- Weeds

WHILE OUR CURLEWS ARE WIDESPREAD, THEY ARE NOT NUMEROUS. YOUR COUNTS MATTER!

This project is funded by Queensland Government's Government Citizen Science grants and delivered by Birdlife Australia.

If you'd like to get involved with Beach-nesting Bird Surveys, please contact beachnesting@birdlife.org.au

For more Beach Stone-curlew & Double-curlew information, please contact beachnesting@birdlife.org.au

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birdlife AUSTRALIA

WHO'S BEEN LIVING IN MY DOWNSTAIRS WALL?



First there was the possum who tried to get in, and chewed the covering of a wire for a downstairs light and seems neither to have been electrocuted nor sufficiently satisfied with the plastic taste to chew through to the wire itself. It didn't get in, but it tried. Dangerously.

Then there was the electrician who was scheduled to repair the damage early in May. Then there was my son, who began to remove a board on top of a three metre wall in preparation for the repair to take place.

Then there was the tiny gap through which mud wasps had been getting into the cavity behind the board to build their nests. They squeezed in easily, and left lots of clumps of mud.

Fortunately, the board had been secured in a way that allowed easy removal. Thanks builder!

However, son was very cautious, and shone his phone light along the cavity before reaching in to clear the space. Then he took a photo. Surely none of those coils could possibly have fitted through that tiny mud wasp gap! Now I understood why my neighbours had been complaining about mice while I had none. When we told our local snake removalist that we had a snake coiled up three metres from the ground,

he suggested a hibernating python, until he saw the photo. It clearly wasn't python, and hibernating or not, son worked very carefully a few centimetres from its coils to remove some other pieces of wood.

Eventually, it stirred and the camera got the full head shot through the 100mm gap where the board had been.

"What big yellow eyes you have, Snake!" we said. "All the better to see at night, my dears".

"And what a broad nose you have, Snake!" "All the better to catch a mouse, my dears."

"And are you a 'Brown Snake', Snake?"

"Well, I'm brown, but I'm not a 'common' brown snake. They have tiny eyes and a narrow face. I'm a *Boiga irregularis* who thought this hollow very suitable for a Brown Tree Snake for winter. Can I go back to hibernating, please?"

And Snake did.

Next day, snake relocater came and took all two metres of Snake down the paddock, and we haven't seen her since. I guess I'd better set my mouse trap again!

✿©*Ann Hobson, Theodore 2023*
(Upper Dawson Branch member)



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 Phone 5484 9111

WILDCARE (operates from Pomona) Phone 5527 2444

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 (from Morgans)
- get the logo on any shirt at Morgans Sewing & Embroidery in Pialba.

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