



Next Meeting Friday 28th July 2023

In Plastic Free July, WPSQ Bayside Branch presents a talk by Dr. Luigi Vandi on bioplastics

An overview on biobased/biodegradable plastics and their impact on the environment including an introduction on these materials, the current products/materials on the market and where Australia stands compared to the rest of the world.

When: Friday 28th July 2023 at 7.00 pm

Where: [Alexandra Hills Community Hall](#), 131-155 Finucane Road, near "Aldi". Entry & car parking just around corner off Windemere Road

General Public Welcome, Entry by gold coin donation, booking required for entry.

Click [LINK](#) for Eventbrite website. For more information, contact Steve on 0423 036 676 or bayside@wildlife.org.au



Image: Dr Luigi Vandi

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President's Report

Bayside Branch | July 2023

Steve Homewood

Thanks to every-one who came along last Friday on such a cold night to hear from WPSQ projects officer Matt. We received some great reports and special photos from the teams that are collecting evidence-based data to ensure that we achieve better outcomes for our Wildlife, which is under so much pressure from development, climate change, wildfires and feral animals. Funding is coming from all levels of government, data and advice is also being requested by business. Look at the [WPSQ project](#) website for updates.



Photos from WPSQ trail cameras in the Crows Nest area

Winter is upon us but the cool westerlies have yet to eventuate, it was nice to have the unseasonable rain nearly 30mm this week. Wattles are starting to come out seemingly earlier than usual. It is always a great time for a “brisk” ramble, try the Glider Reserve circular walk or along the foreshore path starting from Redland Bay Golf Club, have a coffee at the Island Ferry Terminal before you make your way back. Just make sure you take a bag to pick up rubbish, there is still a minority that have no understanding of the environment and the years some rubbish takes to breakdown.

This month is [“Plastic Free July”](#) it is a challenge to individuals and businesses to reduce the amount of plastic they use or receive, see how you go. Our speaker this month 28 th July will be talking about Bioplastics (biobased/biodegradable plastic), which is by definition is “a plastic derived from biological substances, rather than from petroleum, many types of which are biodegradable.” The talk will be targeted to a general audience, will discuss product, its impact on the environment and how Australia is performing against other countries.

“Only we humans make waste that nature can’t digest.”

— **Charles Moore, Oceanographer**

“There is no such thing as ‘away’. When we throw anything away, it must go somewhere”

— **Annie Leonard, Businesswoman, activist and Filmmaker**

Out and About



*Pademelon @Springbrook
Photo Chelsea*



*Purling Falls Springbrook.
Photo Chelsea*



Hinze Dam recreation area - Photo Chelsea



Wattle just out in Glider Reserve. Photo Steve



At Bribie Island breakthrough, Caloundra Photo Steve

Wildlife Diary

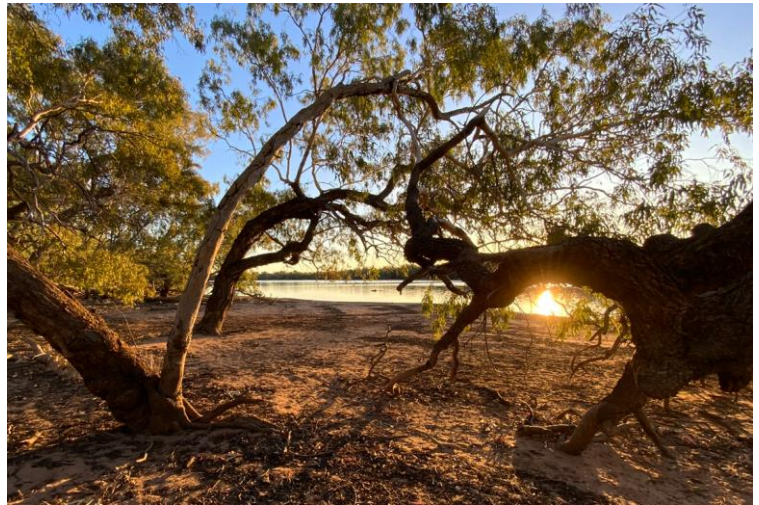
If you have recently photographed wildlife and you would like to share with others send an email to us with your photograph/s. email bayside@willdlife.org.au

Wildlife of Currawinya National Park

Red sandplains and mulga scrubs beside long, dusty roads give little hint to the lakes, rivers and wetlands that make Currawinya one of Australia's most important inland waterbird habitats. Lake Wyara and Lake Numalla are an important feature of the park which also protects thousands of years of Aboriginal cultural heritage and 19th and 20th century pastoral history as well as threatened wildlife. Currawinya National Park has a total area of around 344,000ha, making it one of Queensland's largest national parks. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Black-fronted Dotterel,
Euseyornis melanops



Myninya Currawinya National Park
Photos by M & S Baltais



Mulga Parrot,
Psephotus varius



Handling Venomous Australian Snakes

Bayside member John on his experience on handling Venomous Australian Snakes

In a world filled with diverse creatures, few can capture our attention and evoke a sense of both fear and intrigue like venomous snakes. I have always been fascinated with snakes, but unsure of how to respond to them. In May this year, I had the opportunity to attend an advanced venomous snake handling course at Gatton. Led by renowned instructors, Chris May and Dr Christina Zdenek, a researcher at the Venom Evolution Lab at the University of Queensland. This course gave me invaluable instruction in snake handling and relocation and conservation. My objective was to gain knowledge and familiarise myself with elapids, known for their short, fixed, hollow fangs for injecting venom. In addition, I wanted to know how to react when I encounter a snake, whether to leave it alone or to relocate it to a safer site.

The course covered a wide range of topics, beginning with the basics about venoms and their effects on humans, as well as treatments for a bite. We also covered what they prey on, and that the animal does not consider us as prey but uses venom as a protection when it feels threatened. Interestingly, the feared Brown snake has short fangs, only 2-3 mm long, meaning that long pants and boots provide protection. However highly venomous taipan fangs are much longer, at 8-14 mm.

We learned to differentiate between various species, including pythons, Death adders (*Acanthophis*), Copperheads (*Austrelaps*), Pale headed snakes (*Hoplocephalus*), Tiger snakes (*Notechis*), Coastal Taipans (*Oxyuranus*), Red-bellied black snakes (*Pseudechis*), Rough scaled snakes (*Tropidechis*), and the formidable Mulga or Brown snake (*Pseudonaja*). We got to handle and bag all these species. Important identification features include the number of midbody scale rows, ventral scales, subcaudal scales and whether the anal scale is divided. Accurate identification plays a vital role in assessing potential threats and treatment in the event of a bite.

I found handling these snakes quite challenging, but by being patient, and holding them gently in the right places, I was able to bag each one successfully. Grabbing a snake by the tail and letting it hang in the air TV-style, can make them agitated and aggressive. The two Chris' were very professional and helpful, guiding us all the way. I really enjoyed the course, and I now feel more knowledgeable about handling a snake interaction.

Let's throw out the old dogma that a good snake is a dead snake. By embracing a deeper understanding and advocating for their conservation, we can allow these incredible creatures to live their lives as a vital part of the ecosystem.

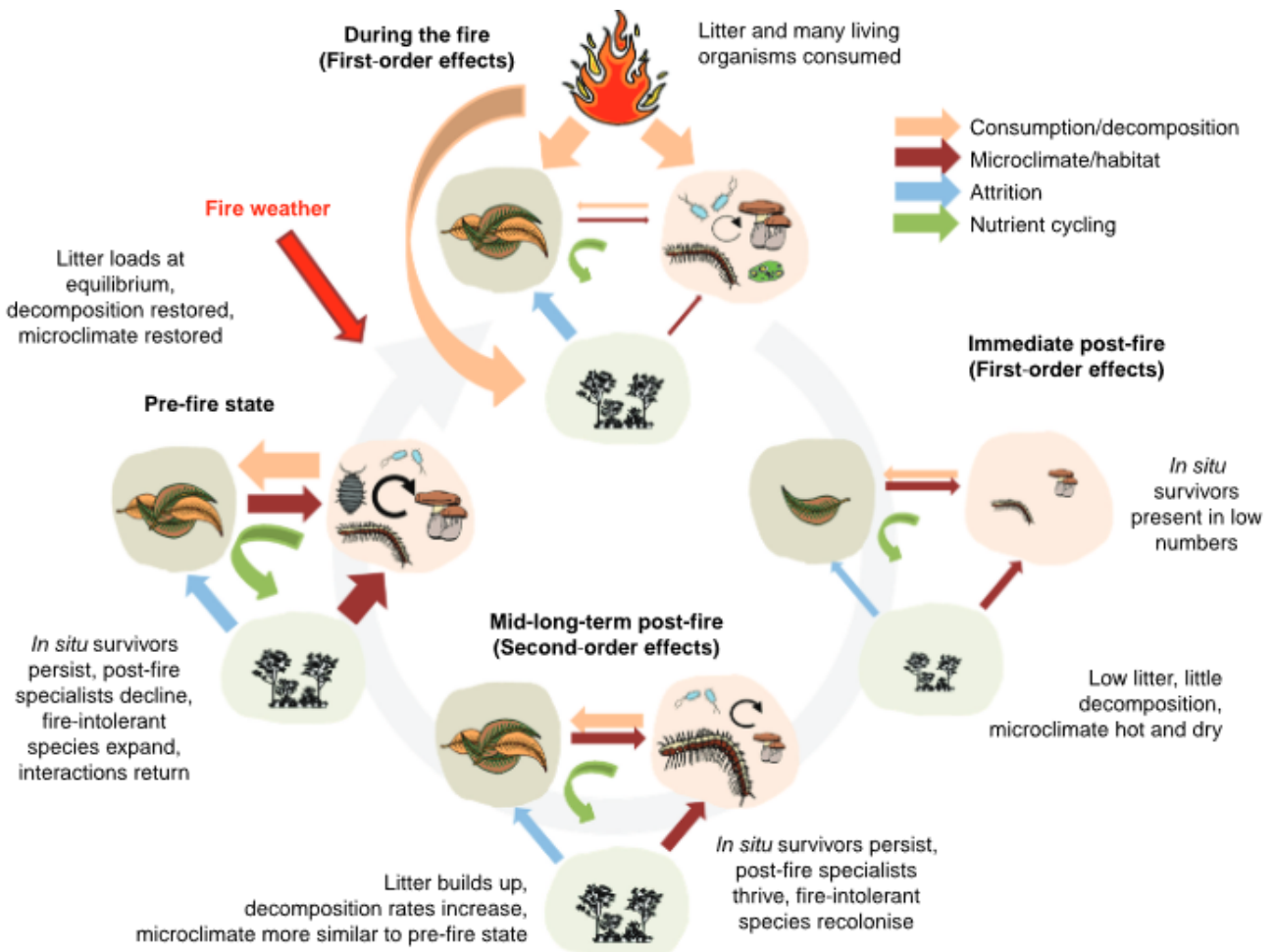


The role of decomposer communities in managing surface fuels: a neglected ecosystem service.

Surface fuel loads are a key driver of forest fires and the target of hazard reduction burns to reduce fire risk. However, the role of biota in decomposition, or feedbacks between fire and decomposer communities are rarely considered.

Ninety gigatons of terrestrial plant biomass, amounting to 90% of annual production, enters the global pool of dead organic matter each year (Cebrian 1999). **The biomass is transformed into inorganic forms via complex decomposition steps or exits the pool through consumption by fire.** While biological decomposition transforms organic material into microbial mass or stable humic substances, dead organic material consumed by fire is mostly lost to the air as carbon dioxide and methane.

Decomposer organisms are important in regulating surface fuels in many ecosystems and fuel loads drive fire. Source: <https://www.publish.csiro.au/wf/pdf/WF21112>



Both invertebrates and microbes are important in litter decomposition. Invertebrates are directly responsible for an average of 37% of litter loss and up to 20% of wood loss on the forest floor annually across the globe (García-Palacios et al. 2013; Ulyshen 2016). Leaf litter decomposes considerably faster than woody debris. Click [here](#) to read more.

Positive Headlines

Eyre Bird Observatory

Iceland suspends whale hunting over animal welfare concerns.

Iceland's government says it is suspending this year's whale hunting until the end of August due to animal welfare concerns, likely bringing the controversial practice to a historic end.

The hunting of fin whales — the second-largest marine mammal after the blue whale — was resumed in Iceland in 2006 following a 1986 moratorium.

Minister of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Svandís Svavarsdóttir, said in a statement on Tuesday.

"This activity cannot continue in the future if the authorities and the license holders cannot ensure the fulfilment of the welfare requirements."

Ms Svavarsdóttir said she would seek the opinions of experts and whale hunting license holders to explore further limitations on whaling in the future.

Animal rights groups and environmentalists hailed the decision, with the Humane Society International calling it "a major milestone in compassionate whale conservation".

Recent monitoring by Iceland's Food and Veterinary Authority on fin whale hunting found that the killing of the animals took too long based on the main objectives of the Animal Welfare Act.

Shocking video clips broadcast by the veterinary authority showed a whale's agony as it was hunted for five hours. The country has only one remaining whaling company, Hvalur, and its licence to hunt fin whales expires in 2023.

Another company hung up its harpoons for good in 2020, saying it was no longer profitable. Iceland's whaling season runs from mid-June to mid-September, and it is doubtful Hvalur would head out to sea that late in the season.

Annual quotas authorise the killing of 209 fin whales and 217 minke whales, one of the smallest species.

But catches have fallen drastically in recent years due to a dwindling market for whale meat. Click [here](#) to read more.

Mining giants Rio Tinto and Alcoa drop plans to explore WA's South West following community pressure.

Two major mining companies have backtracked on plans to mine near jarrah forests in WA's South West following backlash from the local community.

Rio Tinto had submitted 10 applications to look at opportunities to mine lithium and nickel near the town of Dwellingup, south of Perth, catching local communities off-guard.

However, it has since been confirmed the company will not move forward with the plan.

"Rio Tinto is in the process of withdrawing its applications for exploration licences in the South-West of Western Australia," a company spokesperson said.

"This decision has been made for a number of reasons including in response to concerns raised by local communities."

The exploration licences had been fiercely opposed by local shires and community groups making it one of the most highly contested matters that has appeared before the Warden's Court.

The court heard there were 1,500 separate objections to the 10 tenements.

Shire of Waroona President Mike Walmsley welcomed the decision and said the Northern Jarrah Forest needed to be protected.

"It's a good outcome that the companies listen to community concern and they've decided to withdraw," he said.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Pale-headed Rosella, *Platycercus adscitus*

Even though it is brightly coloured, the Pale-headed Rosella is very well-camouflaged when feeding amongst leaves in the canopy of trees.

The Pale-headed Rosella is a medium-sized, broad-tailed parrot, with a pale head and all white, or blue and white cheek patches. The underbelly is mainly blue, with red under the tail. The back is yellow with dark flecks. The female is similar, though slightly duller, with an off-white underwing stripe. There is marked geographical variation, with differences in the depth of colour and the facial patch. This is a noisy and conspicuous parrot, except when feeding.

Pale-headed Rosellas are found in savanna woodlands, lightly timbered woodlands with a grassy understorey, tree-lined watercourses and agricultural lands.

The Pale-headed Rosella is endemic to north-eastern and eastern Australia.

Movements are poorly known and the Pale-headed Rosella is usually considered to be resident.



Pale-headed Rosellas feed mainly on the ground, but also in trees and shrubs. They mainly eat seeds and fruits of grasses, shrubs and trees, as well as flowers, insects and their larvae. They feed more often in shade than in sunlight.

The call is similar to that of the Eastern Rosella: 'kwik, kwik' calling in flight, or when perched a high pitched rapid 'pi-pi-pi-pi-pi' and soft chattering.

Pale-headed Rosellas make their nests in the hollows of either dead or living trees, usually in eucalypts, or hollow stumps and posts. The nest is often near water. The eggs are laid on wood dust. Only the female incubates, though a few days after hatching the male helps with feeding the young.

Breeding Season: September to January or any time depending on rainfall.

Source: [Australian Museum](#)

	Classification
	Genus <i>Platycercus</i>
	Species <i>adscitus</i>
	Family Psittacidae
	Order Psittaciformes
	Class Aves
	Size Range
	28 cm to 34 cm



The Hidden Life of Trees

foreword by TIM FLANNERY
PETER WOHLLEBEN

The Hidden Life of TREES



What They Feel,
How They Communicate

Discoveries from a Secret World

The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate – Discoveries from a Secret World.

In *The Hidden Life of Trees*, Peter Wohlleben shares his deep love of woods and forests and explains the amazing processes of life, death, and regeneration he has observed in the woodland and the amazing scientific processes behind the wonders of which we are blissfully unaware. Much like human families, tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, and support them as they grow, sharing nutrients with those who are sick or struggling and creating an ecosystem that mitigates the impact of extremes of heat and cold for the whole group. As a result of such interactions, trees in a family or community are protected and can live to be very old. In contrast, solitary trees, like street kids, have a tough time of it and in most cases die much earlier than those in a group.

Drawing on groundbreaking new discoveries, Wohlleben presents the science behind the secret and previously unknown life of trees and their communication abilities; he describes how these discoveries have informed his own practices in the forest around him. As he says, a happy forest is a healthy forest, and he believes that eco-friendly practices not only are economically sustainable but also benefit the health of our planet and the mental and physical health of all who live on Earth

A revolution has been taking place in the scientific understanding of trees, and Wohlleben is the first writer to convey its amazements to a general audience. The latest scientific studies, conducted at well-respected universities in Germany and around the world, confirm what he has long suspected from close observation in this forest: Trees are far more alert, social, sophisticated—and even intelligent—than we thought. Click [here](#) to read more.

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The Atlas of Living Australia

Biological collections play an important role in understanding trends in biodiversity life sciences. With advances in genomics, imaging, artificial intelligence and machine learning, more information can be obtained from physical-biological specimens than has ever been possible before. The ALA has been proud to play a key role in ensuring data emerging from Australia's collections is made findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable globally. **Click [here](https://www.ala.org.au/) to know more <https://www.ala.org.au/>**



[galah](https://www.galah.org.au/) is an interface to biodiversity data hosted by the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA). It enables users to locate and download species occurrence records (observations, specimens, eDNA records, etc.), taxonomic information, or associated media such as images or sounds, and to restrict their queries to particular taxa or locations.

Contacts and Important Links

Committee & Contacts

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Wildlife Diary Editor	Simon Baltais	

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Bayside Branch

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Membership Application

Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland

Memberships Types

- \$30.00 Single
- \$20.00 Concession (Pensioner/Full Student)
- \$45.00 Family or Non Profit Group
- \$12.50 Junior

Optional Wildlife Magazine Subscription

- \$47.00 per year inc GST (Four Issues)
- \$90 for 2 years inc GST (Eight Issues)
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