

CONSERVATION NEWS  
Oct-Nov 2021

Meetings:

Third Wednesday of the  
month, 1.00 pm

At: Caloundra Power Boat  
Club, 2 Lamerough Parade,  
Golden Beach

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Suzanne Aspland

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



## From the August & September Meetings

**Jill Chamberlain OAM is the recipient of the Margaret Thorsborne Award 2021!**

**Jill's astonishing and sustained commitment to our branch of WPSQ is justly recognised with this award:**

*'I believe one letter is worth a thousand people jumping up and down and making a noise.'*

Jill is our Society's letter-writer extraordinaire. Her fine-tooth combing of development applications and skilled grasp of legislation has, over many years, put strong and effective pressure on decision-making at all three levels of government.

And not just through letter-writing has this engagement worked: attending council meetings, being part of community groups advising councils and developers on environmental issues, and working with council staff (witness the success of the annual Wildflower Festival) have been powerful and persuasive tools.

Those community groups beyond our branch that she has contributed to, often as an inaugural member, include the Sunshine Coast Environment Council, the Friends of Mary Cairncross Association, the Friends of Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens, and Take Action for Pumicestone Passage, and through her involvement she has built up a formidable network of contacts, as well as gaining widespread respect.

Through her detailed knowledge of the local birdlife, Jill has been an invaluable mainstay of our Faunawatch project, attending outings and recording observations in all weather conditions, as well as conducting regular surveys for the Queensland Wader Study Group. She has only recently retired from weeding sessions with the Bushcare group at Watson Park Environmental Reserve and guiding of annual Wildflower Festival walks.

Jill's concern for the conservation of the Sunshine Coast's habitat – for the value of biodiversity, and for the wellbeing of people – is recognised in the naming of the Jill Chamberlain Nature Refuge at Little Mountain.

Since she joined WPSQ in 1990, Jill's quiet and always cheerful determination has served us well, furthering the cause of conservation so forcefully put in front of the community by Kathleen McArthur and other WPSQ stalwarts. In 1993 Jill became Honorary Secretary, in 2007 was awarded an Honorary Life Membership, and in 2009 stepped up for the role of President. Jill received a hugely deserved Order of Australia in 2010 for 'service to wildlife preservation and conservation in Queensland

### Advance Dates

#### Next Branch meetings:

**Wednesday 20 October & 17 November, 1 pm at the Caloundra Power Boat Club, Golden Beach**

**12 November Book launch**

**14 November** Celebration of the life of Margaret Watson, Ben Bennett Bushland Park, close to the Queen Street carpark entrance



**27 November**

**Premiere** at the Majestic Cinema at Nambour of the short film 'Before We're Gone', a tale of different generations inspired by a love of the Wallum Heathland by Lilli Corrias-Smith.

#### Faunawatch Outings

**Second Wednesday Walks 8 am** at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens (COVID restrictions permitting)

**13 Oct, 10 Nov (last of the year).**

**First Monday walks:**

**29 October, 8 am**

**Bobbie Sattler Nature Reserve, Caloundra**

The Sattler name is famous on the coast, so it's time to have a look at the land left as a nature reserve by the family.

**Meeting Point:** Park on the north-west corner of Chaplin Circuit in Corbould Park.

and to the community', and became an Honorary Senior Fellow of the University of the Sunshine Coast in 2014.

We have been honoured to have had Jill as such a hard-working office-bearer of our branch for so many years, and thank her for her ongoing inspiration.

**Two other branches submitted nominations for equally inspirational long-term members, and Head Office had no choice but to make three awards!**

#### Shelly Beach to Moffat Beach Coastal Study

Our members and TurtleCare volunteers have been keeping in touch with Bill Haddrill regarding a date for the promised forum/workshop; it looks like it will be late October with the predicted timeframe for the report going to Council being:

- workshop
- 2 weeks for feedback from community
- 1 week to incorporate feedback into the report
- December Council meeting.

Bill and consultant Cathryn visited Bundaberg and Mon Repos and spent time with National Parks (QPWS) rangers and staff discussing research and science, with a focus on beach vegetation management over the past 30-40 years, referencing light spill, people's access and dune stability. This included sharing lessons learnt, what they would not do again and future directions for the area. This discussion helped confirm Cathryn and Bill's thinking on beach/dune/hind dune management and provided new insights. This meeting followed a number of chats with QPWS over the past few months about vegetation management.

Cathryn and Bill also met Bundaberg council staff to discuss turtle volunteers, tourism and economic value, and in particular direct, indirect and general light glow management, and reported that they came away with a few good, simple ideas for SCC and a few things to avoid.

They have also spoken with Col Limpus, the turtle expert at Mon Repos.

For updates on the Study, register on Council's link: <https://haveyoursay.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/shelly-beach-moffat-beach-coastal-study>

Friends of Moffat and Shelly (a group taking part in the Shelly-Moffat Coastal Study) has set up a Facebook page to share information on the progress of the study and, in the future, any issue of interest to Shelly-Moffat residents or those who would like to keep informed about the area and its management.

<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofmoffatandshelly>

#### Pumicestone Passage

We have sent our letter of support to Take Action for Pumicestone Passage for their submission to the Minister for Transport & Main Roads and Council re speed limits on the

**25 November, 8 am  
Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve**

This 31-ha reserve has a great mix of Eucalyptus species including flooded gum, blackbutt and ironbark. With *Allocasuarina* also on the site we might get to see a Glossy black cockatoo.

**Meeting Point:** Corner of Winchester Road and Oakwood Street, Caloundra

**Wildflower Festival Walks:  
report by Jude Crighton**

Mindful of the need to maintain social distance, we were again restricted in the number of walkers we could guide safely. Thank you to Claire Brown for organising QR check-ins for straight-forward registrations, to Jenny Gursansky and Sue Aspland for excellent plant ID lists, and to other members who helped at all walks.

At **Ben Bennett Bushland Park** on Saturday 21 August, Sue had devised a COVID-safe self-guided walk, and attached numbered labels to the plants on our list, and this proved popular with our participants. With a wet autumn followed by a very dry winter, many of our usual favourites like the Pea flowers (*Pultenea myrtoides* and *villosa*) and Prickly Moses (*Acacia hubbardiana*) finished flowering early, but there was still plenty of interest. We also demonstrated to our walkers how the proposed 4-lane road through the southern sector of the Park will impact the adjacent wildflower-rich Wet Heath areas. A Faunawatch survey in Ben Bennett on the following Monday identified 42 different bird species.

Preliminary forays through the eastern sector of **Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve** had also suggested that our walk might

Pumicestone Passage. We do have some reservations that the proposed limits do not go far enough.

**Ben Bennett Bushland Reserve**

**Caloundra Transport Corridor Upgrade:** Compulsory Land Acquisitions were approved at Council's August meeting in spite of a 'lost petition' against the action. Visitors to Council's shopping centre 'information sessions' found them inadequate as a vehicle for alternative views. Comment on the CTCU is open until the end of October. Some reporting of the issue has been in the online *Sunshine Coast News* and *Sunshine Coast Daily*. WPSQ has walked through the vulnerable area in Ben Bennett with Div 2 Cr Landsberg, and contact has been made with Environment Portfolio Cr Suarez. Our support for the Value Caloundra Community petition was agreed at our meeting, and a letter of support for the Value Caloundra Communique, to be issued by the Caloundra Liveability Alliance, has been sent.

If you haven't yet checked out the scale of the Council plan, visit the YouTube fly-through of transport modelling in 2026 of the Upgrade (Omrah Avenue to Nicklin Way):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHdH\\_ltWTHo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rHdH_ltWTHo)

Here is the private community survey on this issue:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfTnj00Bu3Xe7fp43qzhVPWtCls9ejxalvEXhs\\_hly\\_4czAGQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfTnj00Bu3Xe7fp43qzhVPWtCls9ejxalvEXhs_hly_4czAGQ/viewform)

and the Facebook page of 'Value Caloundra', whose campaign for a scaled-down version of the road, with a lesser impact on the Park and the community, we support:

<https://www.facebook.com/valuecaloundra>.

Here is the link to the Value Caloundra petition to State Government:

<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Petitions/Petition-Details?id=3592>

**Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve**

Consultants SMEC Holdings Ltd have been appointed to develop a new Caloundra Aerodrome Master Plan and our meeting with a staff member from the Brisbane branch is in the pipeline.

There has been a change of Executive at the Queensland Air Museum, leading to discussions with the new President who has expressed a new approach to their requirements for space; this has positive implications for the intactness of the Reserve.

During the Wildflower Festival walk in the Reserve, the idea was floated for a mural on the rear wall of the Skydiving building, which is leased from Council. Jude will follow up with Glenn Paine, Council's Property Services Officer at the airport, who attended the walk, and ideas for funding from Councillor discretionary funds or a grant. Kim Morland and Phil Smith are to be approached, with further discussion at the October meeting.

be too late for a good display, but on 2 September there was a pink profusion of Wallum Boronia (*B. falcifolia*) contrasting beautifully with white *Sprengelia sprengelioides* and several species of *Leptospermum*. There were only a few Native Iris (*Patersonia sp.*) this year, but quite a few Milkmaids (see later) and surprisingly, a single unopened Sun Orchid languishing in the shade. We were pleased to be joined by Hilary Pearl from Native Plants Sunshine Coast, who shared her expertise with us.

Before our walk in Kathleen McArthur Conservation Park on 4 September, we were worried that late April's extensive controlled burn by NPWS might not have left a lot of wildflowers. We decided to proceed, only to be greeted by dark clouds just as we set out, but our walkers were a hardy if exceedingly damp bunch, and were rewarded with some stunning blooms.



Image: Lisa Smith

This year's stars were the bright lemon-yellow Wallum Wedge Pea (*Gompholobium virgatum*) in the surviving heath to the south of the central firebreak, and the aptly-named Milkmaids

### Junior Wildlife Art Prize

Anne and Sue reported on our meeting with the Friends of Caloundra Regional Gallery and Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanical Gardens staff and volunteers on 14 September. Two likely judges are to be approached. The CRG Friends will collect funds and create a form letter for potential sponsors. Friends of MRBBG have pledged \$1000, TAPP has offered \$50, and WPSQ \$500, with our members also offering to donate. There is a possibility that SCEC could donate through their Environmental Legacy Foundation. Helen has a high res WPSQ logo to go to the group. There will be \$2000 worth of art material prizes, and winners in age categories will receive a copy of the Mary Cairncross Reserve book. Council graphic design team are working on a logo, ready for mid-November, and entry forms will go to schools at the start of the new school year, limited to Queensland entrants with entries to be lodged online. An exhibition may be held at MRBBG next year. WPSQ has proposed a separate category, the Kathleen McArthur Endangered Species prize, with permission to be gained from her family. The next meeting of the group is 9 November.

### WPSQ's book

The Indexing and design of member Elaine Green's book *Piece by piece: conservation and development on the Sunshine Coast 1960-2020* are now complete and the next step is delivery to the printer on 18 October. A booking has been made at the North Shore Community Centre for the launch on Friday 12 November.

### Faunawatch with Paul Smith

Another survey around the Aura Environmental Protection Zone has been conducted and trail cameras collected. Key species included Spectacled/Black-faced monarchs, long-nosed bandicoots, echidnas, and Little eagle. It was noted that 'positrack' clearing has occurred in the Wurubambi (Little Italy) site as well as an organised burn. The burn has occurred on multiple sites through the environmental reserve but was kept to the outside margins of the vegetated areas. However, further widening of the fire tracks has occurred, and the internal clearing for the positrack was through the acid frog pond.

A walk around the new path system through the Blackbutt Forest (next to the new dog park in Baringa) was held with Stockland/HLW/Council and other interested parties. The new path is expected to be opened in November with information to be sourced for the installation of interpretive signage of interesting/important flora and fauna species present within the area. An extension of the path will include a walk through the sedge and *notophyll* vine forest, including a board walk around the acid frog pond. This is due for opening in early 2022. Continued concern is held over bringing in of foreign material to 'path' the area.

(*Burchardia umbellata*)  
springing up everywhere in the  
regenerating burnt areas.



Image: Sue Aspland

The Wallum Grasstrees (*Xanthorrhoea fulva*) had also just sent up their new flower spikes, and the Woombye bush (*Phebalium woombye*), covered in masses of white flowers, now extends all across the southern sector. Tiny track-side favourites included the Wire lily (*Laxmannia gracilis*) and numerous Sundews (*Drosera sp.*). And all along the Swamp Track were single sentinel Sun Orchids (*Thelymitra purpurata*), just waiting for the clouds to clear before they opened. We'll return later in the year to see if the burn has prompted any Christmas Bells to flower.

Wildflower Walker and photographer Lisa Smith's daughter Lilli Corrias-Smith is completing a short film entitled 'Before We're Gone', (see **Advance Dates** above).

The Faunawatch outing on the western side of Mount Emu was successful despite a shower of rain.

**See the side panel for Faunawatch outing dates.**

## Response with Jill Chamberlain

**It is timely and important that Jill has responded to an application for housing at Little Mountain adjacent to the Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve:**

**Re: RAL21/0035**

Development proposal on 102&104 Old Caloundra Road, Little Mountain (Lot 1 on RP88161 & Lot 1 on RP127289)

Jill expressed three main concerns:

### **Bushfire Risk**

'We are of the opinion that there is an unacceptable risk of bushfire to this proposed development. We understand that, according to the consultants, Bushfire Risk Reducers, one of the worst-case fire weather conditions for a bushfire is a downslope of 5° beneath forest vegetation.

The majority of the west-facing boundary of the proposed development site adjoins such a slope in the form of the interface with the vegetation in the Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve, made more hazardous by the fact that fire tends to burn upslope, and the site is on steeply sloping land.

We understand also that the areas to the west, south and north are classified as Bushfire Prone Areas with a hazard rating of "Very High". We suggest that the entire interface be classified as "High Hazard".

The fire trail along the inside boundary of Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve might be sufficient to delay a westerly bushfire in conjunction with the site land consisting of mainly grassland and a scatter of buildings, but we are of the opinion that the existing fire trail and the proposed bushfire buffer of 16 metres on the site are not sufficient where there are multiple dwellings.

We would also like to see a boundary fence along the rear of the lots, as an extra line of defence, and to inhibit weeds and domestic animals escaping into the Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve.'

Further bushfire threats can arise from an accumulation of leaf litter and other factors recognised by the QFES, such as 'juveniles or others building camps, and the torching of vehicles, etc.'

Jill writes: 'We are of the opinion that the existing fire trail and the proposed bushfire buffer of 16 metres on the site are not sufficient where there are multiple dwellings...We are concerned that there is only a cul-de-sac roadway proposed for ingress and egress to and from the site'.

### **Traffic**

'We note that access to and from the proposed development will only be from Bellvista Boulevard', with all the attendant problems of getting in and out of the Boulevard onto Caloundra Road, a route currently under great stress.

### **Stormwater Management**

'We have concerns over the amount of cut, in some instance up to 1000 mm, and fill which appears necessary to flatten the ridge line in order to provide building envelopes. In our opinion, this will alter

**Council's Environment Forum, on the theme of 'Bold conservation interventions' on Friday 24 September** saw over 200 volunteers in Council's BushCare and other natural areas regeneration groups treated to a fine talk by turtle guru Dr Col Limpus, from Mon Repos near Bundaberg, then a Q & A.

Col Limpus stepped us through the processes of testing knowledge of turtle reproduction and behaviour, from the records of William Dampier in the 17th century through to the latest applications of tracking and sex determination. It has been a slow and painstaking (and continuing) process to understand turtles, particularly the Loggerhead Turtle, now on the Australian and Queensland Endangered list and the IUCN Red List.

**Members of an expert panel (real and virtual) fielded questions on their individual areas of interest:**

**Peter Andrews OAM's** farming technique is known as Natural Sequence Farming, since 2016 designated a UN-recognised model for sustainable agriculture – one of only five in the world.  
[www.peterandrewsoam.com](http://www.peterandrewsoam.com)

**Dr Romane Cristescu** is Director of Detection Dogs for Conservation and a Research Fellow at the University of the Sunshine Coast. The team is involved in koala welfare in partnership with wildlife rescue groups.  
[www.facebook.com/DetectionDogsForConservation](http://www.facebook.com/DetectionDogsForConservation)

the direction and velocity of flow across the site, though it appears that the existing Lawful Points of Discharge are to remain. We hope that the scour barrier at the outflow at LPD A will be sufficient to slow flow velocity to prevent any adverse effect to that portion of the Jill Chamberlain Nature Reserve.'

Jill also has concerns that there will be sufficient swales and retention basins within the Stormwater Management Plan.

## Wildlife Qld AGM and Branch get-together

The main message, unfortunately, from the AGM Executive was that the Protected Estate is largely being ignored by the State Government, despite their 17% target for national parks since coming to power. The increase is just 0.02%! – from 8.24 to 8.26%. President Peter Ogilvie is also deeply concerned that, post-COVID, the access to private development in national parks will be given priority, with potential for broader clearing disguised as fire mitigation, and tourist operator monopolies.

Wildlife Qld remains a go-to organisation for advocacy, information webinars, and successfully runs its projects such as the Glider Network and Platypus Watch with grants; however, running costs and other funding is entirely dependent on will bequests and some donations. The magazine, *Wildlife Australia*, now in its 60th year, is produced only through the goodwill of contributing editors, writers and photographers. *If every WPSQ member subscribed, then costs could be covered* (and think Christmas presents to family and friends. It's also available as an app).

**Branch reports** were interesting and encouraging, with a creative solution to lack of volunteers for required executive positions being Andrew's from the **Capricorn Branch** in Rockhampton: pop outside, find an old age pensioner, give them \$20 and make them Vice-President. COVID has prevented their usual butterfly, mangrove and flying fox walks, however they have a strong shopping centre presence and co-opt locals for clean-ups, including on beaches, where Flatback turtles hatchlings have been washed ashore dead, their guts full of polystyrene. Andrew reported also on post-bushfire Mt Etna, with 600 trees planted, and NPWS plans to install sprinkler systems and possibly allow grazing on the perimeter to reduce the grass fire load.

**Bayside Branch** reported that the Toondah Harbour saga continues after 8 years, with no EIS underway; and that a Council survey to determine the most popular use for an open space was ignored when the item voted 8th on the list (white-water rafting) somehow come out on top with the announcement of the Olympics.

Sue Ogilvie has revived the **Brisbane Branch**, with walks on Oxley Creek Common and 3,500 followers on their Facebook page.

**Gold Coast Branch** is partnering with other groups as their new modus operandum (Gold Coast Environmental Council, Save our Spit, Community Alliance) to boost their influence. Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, the quarrying of crystalline silica and associated dust and regional parks are some of their

**Distinguished Professor Peter Harrison's** major research

interests include global patterns of coral reproduction, impacts of pollution and stress on coral reefs and other marine ecosystems.

**Dr Maria Vozzo** is a marine ecologist and is manager of Living Seawalls, transforming seawalls (by fabricating bolt-on nooks and crannies) to enhance native marine biodiversity. There are 14 installations in Australia (including Sydney Harbour and Townsville).

**Brian Warner** is one of the Kabi Kabi Native title applicants and a descendent of the Kabi Kabi and Wakka Wakka tribes. Working with government agencies his particular interest is building economic sustainability through business development for the Kabi Kabi. Current projects include koala programs.

**Dr Arian Wallach** is researching the influence of dingoes on biodiversity and native–non-native coexistence. Her principle of ‘compassionate environmentalism’ (which raised eyebrows at the event), means NOT destroying feral creatures, from cane toads to camels, allowing the potential emergence of natural balances.

**Good news from Sunshine Coast Heritage Library, successful in obtaining a grant from State Library of Queensland to transform 40 of our branch founder Kathleen McArthur's Lunch Hour Theatre scripts into podcasts. The library staff have selected the scripts, interviewed local 'voices' and chosen a Buderim recording studio. Production starts soon.**

concerns. They are encouraged by the appointment of a new Qld Chief Scientific Officer with an environmental science background.

**Kedron Brook Branch** (in Brisbane) continues water testing, insect and other species surveying on the Brook with its headquarters at Cedar Creek. As urbanisation increases so does runoff, with water coming off carparks entering the creek at temperatures as high as 40 degrees. Participants are found through advertising on volunteer websites and committee meetings are held via Zoom.

**Upper Dawson Branch**, although many of its members have moved away from the area, continues activities and citizen science and meet at their annual Camp Out in August. They have worked with their local Council on setting up a bird hide in Theodore.

**The full reports should soon be available on the Wildlife Qld website: [wildlife.org.au](http://wildlife.org.au).**

**Petitions!**

Birdlife Australia is seeking support for the removal of rodent poisons that affect (kill) raptors from the shelves of Bunnings, Australia's go-to hardware store:

<https://www.actforbirds.org/ratpoison>

and here is another, pertinent to Peter Ogilvie's deep concern for the cardinal principle of national parks as reservoirs for biodiversity:

<https://keep-cooloola-cool.org>

Sunshine Coast and Noosa Shire councils have received a Local Government Association of Queensland grant to pilot the first phase of the '**Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Climate Risk Management Framework**', an approach to assist local governments tackle climate change. This will see both councils working with industry, community leaders and state government agencies to identify climate risks and ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt and identify opportunities. **Council surveys are due for completion by Sunday 24 October: [sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](http://sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au) and [noosa.qld.gov.au](http://noosa.qld.gov.au)**

To find out more about the QCRC Program visit <https://qcrc.lgaq.asn.au>

**New Sunshine Coast Council Planning Scheme:** Narelle McCarthy of SCEC and Melva Hobson of OSCAR are on the 10-person Community Reference Group. Sign up for updates from Council.

## Birds with Jenny Gursanscky

**Pacific Baza (*Aviceda subcristata*)** (sometimes known as Crested hawk)

At the end of August I was looking at wildflowers in the Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve on Caloundra Road and was lucky enough to have this large noisy bird fly into a tree right next to me.

The Pacific Baza is often heard and then seen as it crashes into foliage to disturb prey and alert birdwatchers. The Baza has weak feet and talons compared to other raptors but snatches prey such as tree frogs and stick insects from the outer foliage of tree tops. They also eat fruit such as native figs.

The distinctive short grey crest and its bright yellow eyes make it easy to identify. It has a white belly with brown bars, a pale grey head and chest, and a grey and brown back. Legs are short and grey.

Although it appears to be a large bird it is relatively small compared to some of the other raptors, with the male about 38cm and female 43cm, and wingspan around 80 to 100cm. It is uncommon to scarce in north and eastern Australia from the Kimberley to around Sydney but fairly widespread in SE Qld.

Breeding is from October to December and their nest is a flimsy cup shape 15 to 30m high in leafy trees. Habitat is leafy trees on rainforest edges, open forest and woodlands and leafy suburbs.

