



# WAMBALIMAN

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



## THIS ISSUE:

- Presidential Ponderings
- Branch Activity Report
- Nature Walks
- Library Talks
- Book Review
- Bundaberg report
- *Conservation is Complex* (Mary River Turtles)
- *PlatypusWatch* in Theodore

## WINTER 2021

**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.

## Editor's Note

### **"which wildlife group..."**

With similar names, (particularly on Facebook), there is confusion. So here's a "who's who".

#### Fraser Coast Wildlife

Previously mostly snake catching (for which they charged) they have now branched out as a 24/7 wildlife rescue group (they say they are a "non profit environmental conservation organization"). They recently got a lot of publicity after rescuing some freshwater turtles in a drain. They have asked for donations and seem to be doing pretty well. Council workers have assisted with some of their rescues.

Hotline 0477189221

#### Wildlife Rescue Fraser Coast

This is the well established (40 years) local wildlife rescue group, also available 24/7. They have just been given a \$14,000 grant from Council for operating costs for a year. Hotline 0741213146

Council has said they are looking at ways to further assist these wildlife care groups.

If you haven't got these numbers on you for a rescue emergency you ring the government's 1300ANIMAL number and they will divert your call to a local carer.

#### Wildlife Queensland Fraser Coast

That's us. Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland (WPSQ) was just that for 50 years. Then they changed the name to just "Wildlife Queensland"

We are not a rescue group, as in caring for sick and injured animals, but we do try to save animals by protecting their habitat.

Somehow we have to get the message out that habitat loss and human behaviour cause the problems with wildlife and prevention is better than cure. **\*Jenni Watts**



### **WILDLIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND**

*known informally as*

### **WILDLIFE QUEENSLAND**

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# 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 etc.

Send contributions to:  
[gduckz@gmail.com](mailto:gduckz@gmail.com)

**Submissions for the next issue  
are due by Friday 15 October 2021**

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 meetings

**Usually** - 3rd Sunday bi-monthly 2:00pm  
Halcro St Community Centre, Pialba  
15 August  
19 September (AGM)  
21 November

## AGM - 19 September 2021

### NATURE WALKS

7 AUGUST

GLASTONBURY AND ANARRA  
(See page 15)

The new organising committee is John Williams, Frank Ekin & Sam Raveneau. Contact John if you want to be on mailing list for the walks information 0428980019 or [john.williams17@bigpond.com](mailto:john.williams17@bigpond.com)

### WILDLIFE TALKS IN THE LIBRARY

Friday 30 July - 1pm Maryborough Ruby Rosenfield - "Interesting Insects"

Friday 13 August - 12.30pm Hervey Bay Dr Bonnie Holmes - "Who's my Daddy: Insights into shark reproduction"

Friday 27 August - Maryborough John Williams "Indian Mynas"

Bookings essential—see FCRC website

### **FRASER COAST WINTER BACKYARD BIOBLITZ** Weekend 31 July / 1 August

Don't forget to LIKE us on

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

Check out our page on

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

## Presidential Ponderings with Vanessa

### THE TIMES THEY ARE A'CHANGING...

*...Come mothers and fathers  
Throughout the land...  
Your sons and your daughters  
Are beyond your command  
Your old road is rapidly agin'  
Please get out of the new one  
If you can't lend your hand  
For the times they are a-changin'...*



Bob Dylan's 1964 anthem to change resonated with many of us who were youngsters in that great decade of social change, the 1960s. It seems particularly appropriate again, nearly 60 years later. Between a certain global pandemic, industrial-scale land clearing for development, intensifying evidence of damaging climate change, and the loss of so much of our biodiversity, our environment is changing before our eyes, despite clear evidence that human lives and human health are intertwined with environmental health and will suffer as our environment declines.

Our Branch, too, is not immune to change, and we are on the cusp of definite change, but hopefully not prolonged uncertainty.

It is time for me to step down from the Executive, after five years of service to the Branch as Secretary, then three years as President. For various reasons I also had to take on some Secretarial functions for the last three years. This was never going to be sustainable.

Kerry Alston, too, finds herself unable to continue in the role of Secretary that she assumed very ably and generously last July.

Our families and our own health and well-being need our greater attention now.

There is rarely a 'good' time to leave. However, I have never subscribed to the notion that any of us are indispensable. I also firmly believe that it is not healthy for any organisation to be dominated for years by any one individual.

Both of us will continue performing our roles until the September 2021 AGM when all Executive positions are automatically declared vacant.

Fortunately, John Williams is willing to continue as Vice-President, while Bruce Dick is also willing to continue on the Executive in some capacity.

I thank John, Kerry and Bruce for their contributions, camaraderie and support over the times we have worked together. They have been terrific to work with.

I would also like to thank the many of you whom I have got to know and in many cases work closely with over the last eight years, as well as those who have contributed in so many ways to the Branch.

The sixty-four million dollar question is whether other people will be willing to step up to join the Executive from Sep-



2020-21 Executive  
John (Vice President)  
Bruce (Treasurer)  
Vanessa (President)  
Kerry (Secretary)

tember. I certainly hope so. Our Constitution requires the Branch to have an Executive of at least a President, Secretary and Treasurer, to fulfil a range of governance functions, but an Executive of 4-6 is best, to share the load.

Each of the 'official' roles requires certain skills and personal qualities as well as a regular commitment of time. Not everyone has these, and many of those who do have them have already given of themselves to this or other groups to the maximum. Skills can usually be learned, but it helps everyone to be able to assume these roles independently, as quickly as possible. Briefings and mentoring will be provided as necessary.

Our membership base is changing. Many of the 'old hands' are ageing and in some instances in increasingly poor health.

Now, more than ever, the Branch is in need of fresh (or recycled!!) blood on the Executive. If you are willing to join

the Executive and help the Branch through this period of change, please let me know as soon as possible.

If we cannot fill the Executive with enough suitable people, then the Branch will have to reconsider how it does its business. Many activities could continue as long as there are members willing to coordinate and run them. However, the Branch needs a functioning Executive in order to service meetings, manage its funds and meet its legal, insurance and financial obligations as an incorporated association.

These are challenges facing some other Branches. The State Council is considering options for structuring WPSQ that may lessen the administrative pressures on Branches in the future.

One thing is certain though. Our environment and our wildlife need community groups such as ours more than ever, to foster the behavioural and attitudinal change essential to secure their futures. **\*Vanessa Elwell-Gavins**

## ***Budding wildlife writers needed!***

Our Branch is a regular contributor to several local publications including the glossy magazine **The Fraser Coast Beacon**, local papers, **Hervey Bay Advertiser** and **The Maryborough Sun** and smaller local news sheets.

Members are invited to submit articles for consideration by our editorial team. For a copy of the criteria or information contact - Diane [dianec.49@hotmail.com](mailto:dianec.49@hotmail.com) and Ruby (ph 41234765) [coryndennett1@dodo.com.au](mailto:coryndennett1@dodo.com.au)

## Quarterly Branch Activity Report

### Submissions, consultation and correspondence

We made a submission on Council's Draft Coastal Futures Strategy at the end of June. Carol Bussey, Frank Ekin and John Williams attended an information session on the Draft Strategy on behalf of the Branch in June.

On 22 April I represented the Branch at a 'community, industry and environment' working group workshop to discuss the revised Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan. Since then, WBBEC (Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council), John Williams and I have had a phone hook-up with Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee and the Gympie Koala Action Group ahead of what we hope will be a meeting with the Department of Environment and Science and the region's environment groups.

We have finalised the contract with University of the Sunshine Coast for the two Honours student projects (Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Greater Gliders) that the Branch has agreed to fund.

We have already made the first payment but it now looks more likely that both projects will start at the beginning of 2022. They will each run for two semesters and will comprise 100% of the students' work to meet the requirements for their Honours degree.

### Branch Meetings

•I had to cancel our April general meeting on the morning of the day it was due to be held because of a lack of a quorum— precipitated by a family emergency.

•We held our June general meeting on Sunday 20 June.

•The Executive has not met this quarter, but liaises regularly and will meet next in late July-early August. It has approved two financial reports out of session.

### Communications

- Autumn Wambaliman was published in April.
- Wildlife Matters, the monthly newspaper column in the free community newspapers in the Fraser Coast has continued apace...

### Nature Walks

Thanks to organising team of John Williams, Frank Ekin and Sam Raveneau, we have held three nature walks: Glenbar National Park (May), Pulgul Creek (June) and Mt Doongul (July). These are perennially popular and have welcomed new walkers, some of whom have gone on to be Branch members.

### Library Talks

Our Library talks program resumed in May, after an enforced Covid-induced hiatus for 14 months. Alan Peebles presented another of his excellent videos in the Hervey Bay Library on 21 May, followed by another one on 16 July, while Lindsay Titmarsh gave an update on Tandora and the koala program there in the Maryborough Library at the end of May. Local snake catcher and wildlife spotter Chris Muller was the June speaker. It was good to see some keen kids at his Hervey Bay talk!

**Branch shirt for sale: brand new, small - medium \$25 Ph. 0418 884 917**

Charmaine, Tony and Scott ran a workshop on using iNaturalist. iNaturalist is set up for 'citizen' scientists, where observations are added to a global database and shared with the Atlas of Living Australia where 'real' scientists have access to information. [A Community for Naturalists - iNaturalist Australia \(ala.org.au\)](#)

The latest Atlas of Living Australia Newsletter included a link to this research article about iNaturalist.

[CSIRO PUBLISHING | Wildlife Research](#)



### **Workshops**

On 30 April Charmaine Savage, Tony van Kampen and Scott Gavins held a workshop at the Hervey Bay Library to introduce members and friends to taking wildlife photographs and lodging them on the iNaturalist website, which is the basis for participating in our quarterly Backyard Bioblitzes.

This was followed by an opportunity during the Autumn Bioblitz to receive further coaching.

### **Bioblitz**

The Autumn Backyard Bioblitz was held on the weekend of 15-16 May, with 14 observers recording 180 species through 278 observations.

### **School Activities**

Diane Christensen and her Schools team held a successful morning with Pialba State School students in June, introducing them to our wonderful flying foxes.

### **Fund-raising**

John Williams has continued his terrific fund-raising efforts at the Beach House Hotel through their weekly raffles.

We have applied to conduct another Bunnings sausage sizzle, but will need to 'watch this space' to see if it comes off (October-December quarter more likely than July-September).

### **Admin jobs**

- Kerry Alston and Bruce Dick have reviewed all our assets. A few items need to be written off when the Executive next meets and some otherwise disposed of.

- Jenni Watts has prepared our end-of-financial-year statement for 2020-21.

- Jenni has also organised the plaque for the seat to be located at Arkarra Lagoons, hopefully in the not too distant future.

This quarter has been a 'typically busy' one for our Branch at this time of year... Many thanks to all those who organised, contributed or participated.

★ *Vanessa Elwell-Gavins.*

Branch Fundraiser  
CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME  
Code: C10192159  
contact Phone: 0428980019

## Bundaberg Community Conservation Advisory Group (CCAG)

The Bundaberg Region LGA and the Fraser Coast Region LGA share similar geographical (social/physical) and environmental challenges. The Community Conservation Advisory Group within Bundaberg Regional Council has a similar structure and function to the Environmental Advisory Group of FCRC. The group, made up of several Councillors and BRC staff plus relevant community members representing specific groups or as individuals, meets on a quarterly basis. CCAG is convened by BRC staff Greg O'Neill (Operational Supervisor, Natural Resource Management) and Sally Obst (Natural Areas Officer).

Twelve people attended the recent CCAG meeting, including Councillor Tanya McLoughlin (Waste & Recycling Portfolio) and some names that might be familiar to Wildlife Fraser Coast members: Heather Usher, Maree McLaren, Maureen Schmitt, Mike Johnson, Pam Soper, Todd Fauser, Gary Brandon, John Gatley, Dianne Clack, John Biersteker, Joy Biersteker. Apologies were Cr Wayne Honor (Parks & Gardens), Roana O'Neill, Pam Liddel, Hilary Reed, Karyn Ennor.

Items of interest to Fraser Coast members from the period 29 January to 21 May 2021 include:

**Dog patrols on beach.** – An increase in residents walking their dogs off leash is a continual issue. This complaint refers to Archies Beach specifically. Council to pass on reports to Lee Hann.

**Protection of remnant roadside vegetation.** – There was discussion regarding the clearing of road corridors, specifically at the hands of developers, e.g. recent example of Branyan Road. A matter for the Planning Department to consider protection of significant remnant vegetation in the Town Planning Scheme.

**Debris and litter in Saltwater Creek.** – A December 2020 clean-up of the creek in the Norville area found a range of litter, industrial waste, food packaging and garden waste. Sally [Obst] mentioned that there have been Council discussions regarding the use of gross-pollutant traps and the ongoing cost/maintenance.

**Turtle-friendly sensor lighting at Bargara.** – Thank you to BRC.

**Barolin Nature Reserve.** – Fire breaks and fencing works have been undertaken. Barolin Nature Reserve trustee permit for agistment of cattle has been adjusted with permitted numbers halved from 40 to 20 for the next 12 months. The numbers will be reviewed again in January 2022.

**Pandanus in Burnett Heads.** – A schedule will be developed to start treatment of the Pandanus soon. This will follow the specialist advice Council received in a report in mid-2020.

**Region's Natural Wonders.** – A booklet is currently being developed showcasing all of the region's natural areas, rather than separate brochures for each location.

**Bush Chapel in Baldwin Swamp.** – Time has been taken to improve the lake edges around Bush Chapel in Baldwin Swamp to assist in connectivity for wildlife. The increase in water bird activity has been noticed as a result.

Several items of interest are available on the BRC Our Bundaberg Region link (<https://www.ourbundabergregion.com.au>), eg

<https://www.ourbundabergregion.com.au/washpool-creek-naturalisation-project>

<https://www.ourbundabergregion.com.au/bundaberg-region-eco-destination-certification>

\*Submitted by Rod Jones

## Can you help?

Whatever the environmental issues facing us today it is still important to work locally to protect our biodiversity.

It's hard being a lone voice and groups like ours, with an established credibility and a State body to back us are vital.

On the face of it, our group presents a successful wildlife preservation presence in the community through our activities and representations.

As our recent July activity showed many of us still enjoy a walk amongst nature and a cuppa and chat. 34 people attended a guided walk in Parraweena Park, Point Vernon, followed by afternoon tea. Our monthly Nature Walks, usually a tad more challenging, are equally well supported.

But we need an effective Executive and enough people to attend general meetings to allow our Branch of WPSQ to continue. This should not be hard considering that we have a membership of over 70 to draw from and the support our activities attract. Finding new Executive members is difficult though.

Our changing world with its technological dependence is challenging for a lot of us and contributes to a reluctance for some to take on Executive roles. There is also a perception that being on the

Executive is onerous and a commitment of too much time and energy.

With smart practices it doesn't have to be. Tasks can be divided up between more people. Someone may be willing to collect mail, someone else to do minutes, someone to communicate electronically with members. Maybe it's time to reduce Wambaliman and put out just a monthly bulletin to members instead. Being on the Executive can give you a chance to learn new skills, grow personally and give the satisfaction you are making a contribution.

It will be a noticeable loss with Vanessa stepping aside. She has served as Secretary and President in the last eight years and was able to fill those positions with knowledge and experience that few members have. She has fulfilled many other roles such as most of the electronic communication with members, submissions and representation on committees. Perhaps we may do things differently in the future.

A president or secretary doesn't have to have all the skills that Vanessa has. We just need someone who is willing to support and be supported by an already amazing band of people doing a lot for the Branch. •*Jenni Watts*

## Nature Walk—Tandora, 27 April 2021



The postponement of the April Tandora walk did not lessen enthusiasm for the rescheduled visit. A taste of Tandora was captured in the 13 km drive through natural woodland to the homestead, much of which had never been logged and some had recovered well from fire a few years earlier. Then there was open cattle country: for the farmers amongst us, there were magnificent fences and cattle to admire. Many troops of kangaroo and some wallabies shared the land with the cattle. A couple of drains and ponds were home to both Black and Wood Ducks.

The farmyard is like no other. Neat and tidy with the most imaginative sculptures and garden furniture made from single tree trunks with their original branches supporting seats and tables. Even the Tandora name was suspended on the elegant S bend at the top third of an otherwise straight branch.

We drove across a paddock to begin the mangrove walk. Property owner Lindsay Titmarsh, or Butch (his preferred name), pointed out several plants which thrive in salty mud. He pointed out how cattle hoof imprints

provided miniature ponds for oxygen producing algae and home for crabs. Indeed, there are 20 crab species amongst the mangroves.

Butch led us along his mangrove track. He made the point that mangrove tree roots must spend more than half of their time out of water to absorb oxygen. The first species encountered was the Yellow Mangrove (*Ceriops australis*) which thrives in the mid to upper tidal zone, and, as it prefers high salt concentrations, it often borders saltpans. Apart from the yellowness of its leaves the Yellow Mangrove has long thin propagules. These are baby trees, a bit like a foetus in mammals. Propagules start to grow all the essential parts, such as roots and leaves before detaching from the parent tree. Propagules are characteristic of mangroves; once detached they float and so they help spread the species.

Another fascinating specimen was the Orange Mangrove (*Bruguiera gymnorhiza*). Its roots bend up to break the water surface to absorb oxygen before plunging down into the rich mud. The appearance is that of a huge gathering

of black cloaked witches or a camp of flying foxes all tightly clumped together. This gives the tree its other name of Knobbly Knee Mangrove.

There are ten easily identifiable mangrove trees, all with their individual features. The great tangle of roots, spreading out beyond the canopy is necessary for exposure to oxygen. It helps us understand the complexity of root systems, their necessity to feed the tree,

manage mud minerals and stabilize river banks and shorelines.

This was a truly amazing trip. The “giggle and chatter factor” registered a high score for interest and enthusiasm amongst the walkers. One person described the area as “a paradise”, another as “a wonderland” and a third as an “exciting challenge”. However one may describe Tandora, it is a tribute to Butch Titmarsh and his family **\*Frank Ekin**

## Nature Walk—Miva State Forest / Glenbar NP, 9 May 2021

At 3:00am on 9 May a mist shrouded Hervey Bay denied meteor enthusiasts a viewing of the ‘Eta Aquanid of May’ shower (from Halley’s Comet). The continuing mist at 6:30am did not thwart the stalwart Nature Walkers who set off on the drive to Miva State Forest.

Happily, the mist lifted to reveal a glorious day. Even before the welcome talk one of the leaders demonstrated a hazard by falling flat on his chin after tripping on a stump, one metre from his car. Everyone else was more alert. That was the only misadventure.

The youngest walker, Sam, described the walk as “a good workout,” another walker of more venerable vintage gave it an arduous factor of “7 out of 10.” The giggle-chatter index registered a high score for pleasure and reward amongst the walkers.

The walk is characterized by having multiple different habitats from well-spaced dry sclerophyll to rain forest. Ground cover varied greatly from sparsely vegetated ground cover in forested areas to areas dense with wildflowers and grasses. There was a



huge diversity of plants for the botanists. Peter gave lessons on tree identification, and we are thankful for his infinite patience. Scott must have exhausted his camera capacity photographing grasses and flowers.

We did not do formal bird spotting but did add six species not identified on previous walks bringing the species list to 38. The best locations were on the summit ridge and in the gullies.

This area has been logged and leased for grazing. Remnants of both are evident. The regeneration of natural vegetation, including tree growth is reassuring. There were many very old trees showing the scars of age, though branch loss and rot do provide habitat

for birds and mammals. Insect habitat in shedding tree bark aroused interest, indeed insect scarring of trees was a feature Butch pointed out on our previous walk at Tandora.

In notes researched by Tony van Kampen this area appears recorded on a cadastre (legal map) in 1883. Glen Echo school was established in 1932. There was a series of access roads, changes in leases, land clearing and some buildings in the following decades in the current Glenbar National Park. A series of aerial photographs show the changes in vegetation most decades from 1952. The Glenbar National Park was gazetted in 2006 and separate from the neighboring Miva State Forest.

The Miva State Forest walk is worth repeating. It may be that some walkers would choose to do the 7.5km circuit simply to enjoy a “Nature Walk.” Others could do a “there and back” of a couple of kilometers to pursue more specific interests, though it is likely that most walkers would want to pursue their particular interest and do the walk too. In the past few weeks I have done the walk five times and am eager for a sixth. **\*Frank Ekin**

## Nature Walk—Pulgul Creek. 5 June 2021



Sam ably led this walk!

Our walk in June, on World Environment Day, celebrated a natural area right in Hervey Bay. Sam led the walk which was apt given his personal interest in indigenous culture and, as a Council worker with the Natural Environment team, he was familiar with the area and the work they carry out there.

The purpose of this short walk of approximately two and a half kilometres was to consider the integration of suburban development with preservation of natural landscape and habitats, to be aware of natural runoff and drainage into tidal salt flats and tidal creeks, and to see Council and local efforts at weed removal and restoration in the area. As well as just enjoy the bush and company!

Only a stone's throw from The Domain residential development at Urangan we were in a beautiful



Marlene checks out echidna diggings in a termite nest.



littoral forest just back from the mangrove lined Pulgul Creek. And there was no hint that an industrial estate was only a few hundred metres away through the trees on the other side of the creek.

Sam spoke to us about the significance of the area to indigenous people. The area was an important resting and feeding site, as well as a navigational point of reference for visits to K'gari when sand bars in the Strait would have afforded easier access to the island.

We saw Cheese Tree, Burdekin Plum, Tuckeroo, Scrub Cherry, Rusty Fig, Celerywood, Beach Acronychia, to mention a few, and a number of native vines in the forested area. Sam pointed out an area the Council has cleared of Green Panic grass to encourage regeneration of native species. It is acknowledged that the kangaroos will browse on the shorter grass so in some places the Green Panic is cut short for them. We walked to the creek and across saltmarshes seeing Grey, Black, Stilt, Yellow and Milky Mangroves. Suddenly we came to an area which had stands of *Melaleuca nodosa* (with its classic paperbark) and in the understorey were pink flowering *Pimelia* sp.

It's no secret that the area is known for its birds and we were not disappointed. Our birdos' list for the day was 25 spe-

cies with a sighting of a Jabiru flying over at the beginning of the walk. Our winter birds have arrived, and we heard Scarlet Honeyeaters among others. Even the most unobservant amongst us could not ignore the incessant tail wagging of the Grey Fantail which ventured within a few metres of us (as insectivorous birds they know when us people disturb the insects for easy pickings).



Weed infestation – partly from garden dumping – is a major problem in the area. Things like Purple Succulent and Coral Creeper need only a piece of leaf or a seed (respectively) and they are off and running. There was the usual grass clippings and garden pruning dumping. Interestingly, behind The Domain complex, there is no access to the bush area through people's back fences and the area is relatively free from invasive garden escapees.

Despite the problems there is lots to celebrate in the way of native bush and birds. **\*Sam, John and Frank**

## Nature Walk—Mount Doongul, 4 July



Clear blue sky, stupendous visibility, cool to warm temperature, Queensland's weather at its magnificent best for the 4 July Nature Walk on Mount Doongul, despite days of dampness and heavy rain during the preceding week.

The Nature Walks records indicate that Tony van Kampen drove to the top of Mount Doongul 2003. By coincidence, the first walk on Mt Doongul in 2015, pioneered by Carole Bussey, was on the same date as this 2021 walk, 4 July. Jenni, Peter and Coryn must have enjoyed that original walk so much that they repeated the walk on 5 August 2017 and again 4 July 2021.

John Williams thought that the route should be reversed and do the steep shorter track to the summit first, then return by the long easy descent. This was a fortunate choice as one of our number had a weak turn on the steep slope and was escorted to the cars by two walkers. This event can happen to

any of us. It emphasizes the need for walkers to stay in contact with the group. We do inform the emergency services of our outings.

Max, who was on the 2017 walk, took pleasure in this change of route. On a personal walk he did this route from the car park to the summit in 45 minutes reducing this time to 35 minutes on this occasion.

The walk fulfilled one of Wildlife's objectives: to educate with a view to conserve fauna and flora. Walkers took a very lively interest in the plant life and had discussions on identification and took photographs of specimens. Bird life was sparse though bird song and sightings identified 24 species. Bird habitat is diverse and mature.

We passed through an area that was the site of a significant bush fire in December 2020. It was distressing to see the middle height vegetation burnt

though sparing the tallest trees which had significant upper story leaf cover. At ground level there was tremendous regrowth, to about a metre high, of a wide range of plants indicating natural resilience. Tony explained that this fire was controlled by the local fire brigades with firebreaks and back burning though a fortuitous rain completed the job.

There was a discussion of fire in Australian bushland. There are academic studies and several recently published popular books on the subject. But for our group, one should give the widest thought to causes, whether considering the recent Fraser Island fires or other fires. It is not sufficient to say a particular fire had 'got away'. It is more necessary to wonder about all the variables impacting on the decision to light a fire for land care, conservation and preservation such as shortage of money, staff, equipment and opportunity to do controlled burns at ideal times . An objective of WPSQ is to "understand the principles of conservation and preservation of the natural environment"

A number of the tallest trees had areas of sap flow like huge stains, these were colourful, but evoked thoughts of these trees bleeding and even crying.

Examples of deep and severe erosion was another topic of concern. The deepest examples seemed to be natural in origin. There were lesser examples possibly attributable to the tyre tracks of the fire trucks in December 2020.

The recent rain was a boon to frogs. Despite intense searching in fresh puddles frogs were too difficult to find. But Peter recorded frog calls on his phone frog app so identified Spotted Marsh Frog and Sign-bearing Froglet.

Judging by the 'chattering index', this was a most enjoyable walk. It was pleasing that many stayed for a picnic lunch. The walk evoked much discussion on so many natural features and occurrences. Indeed, next month's walk at Glastonbury is likely to be just as enjoyable and stimulating.

★**Frank Ekin**

## A DAY TO LOOK FORWARD TO AT GLASTONBURY



Be prepared to see some big trees!

ANARRA, Australian Native Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, is the main reason for a future visit to Glastonbury and the Brooyar State Forest by the Nature Walkers. These are new sites for the Nature Walks on 7 August 2021. This outing fulfils one of the objectives of the WPSQ, "to understand the principles of conservation and preservation of the natural environment of both fauna and flora". This walk provides an opportunity to acquire new knowledge and awareness of the natural world (outside of Fraser Coast).

## the GLASTONBURY reconnoitre

This walk was first suggested by Vanessa, though John has been well aware of the value of a trip to this area and ANARRA. John's reports and enthusiasm encouraged the Nature Walks team to do a reconnoitre.

So, Alice, being the dominant personality, drove a youth, Sam, a responsible gentleman, John, and a fretful grandfather, me, to Glastonbury Camp in the Brooyar State Forest in our 14-year-old ute. Fretful because so many walking sites go by several names.

Musket Flat alias Elliot alias Doongul. Miva State Forest and Glenbar National Park are entered by the same gate off the Glen Echo Road. So, we have Glastonbury Campground in Brooyar State Forest, which is bounded by Fisherman's Pocket State Forest and, not only by King State Forest but by King Conservation Park too. While John, comfortable in the front passenger seat gazed at his mobile phone, with Sam and me folded in the confined after quarters of the ute, Alice got us to Glastonbury Campground with unshakeable confidence.

It is a minimalist camp site with eco-friendly toilets, though unsavoury to sensitive grandfathers. But it has lots of space for tents and combi vans. The Glastonbury Creek runs by the camp site and seems to function as dish washing facilities and ablutions.

A 2.5 km partially formed grade 3 walk starts and finishes at the camp site. It

runs through a different forest type to Doongul which we visited on the last walk. It is maturing well following logging decades ago. There is prolific bird life.

ANARRA, that is Australian Native Animal Rescue and Rehabilitation centre was the main objective of our reconnoitre. This is the property of Paula and David Rowlands. This family is dedicated to wildlife rescue. They have sought to restore the property to encourage natural forest regrowth and restore fauna habitat. A series of pens, cages and runs for the rehabilitation of wounded animals have been built. This is a most formidable and impressive undertaking.

Deb Seal, an energetic MRCCC member, gave figures on the number of rescues, the successes and failures, and sadly the range of animals taken into care.

Following our eye-opening visit to ANARRA, John led us to Point Pure and Eagle lookout and then the route home via Woolooga. This too was a stunning visit. This is a whole new area to be explored.

The journey takes about 1hr 35 minutes from Hervey Bay to the meeting point at Glastonbury Campground. It was a superb and well worthwhile all-day reconnoitre. The Nature Walkers and friends will have a terrific day, planned for Saturday 7 August.

★**Frank Ekin**

## Feeding Wildlife

The Wide Bay region provides habitat for many species of native wildlife and it's from our native forests and home gardens that our wildlife gets the food they need. Although many people enjoy interacting with wildlife by providing food, this can lead to problems including dependence, illness, territorial behaviour and threats from feral or domestic animals.

Kangaroos and wallabies love native grasses, and you might notice they eat other species during the winter months when grasses are not as fresh or nutritious. This includes species like cobblers pegs – a common weed from which macropods derive nitrogen.

Ringtail possums love the fresh shoots of eucalypts, paperbarks and lilly pillies, the fruit of lilly pillies and many other native plants, and the nectar of native flowering plants including bottle brushes and grevilleas.

Brushtail possums mostly eat the fresh shoots of eucalypts, but they are also drawn to your fruiting trees including bananas, mangos, oranges and even the produce in your vegetable garden.

Flying foxes feed mainly at night and are drawn to nectar, pollen and fruit and will also feed on flowering and fruiting plants in gardens and orchards. Our local glider species are omnivores which means they eat nectar, fruit, pollen and insects.

When it comes to our local birds, there is a plethora of species that call our region home. From waterbirds - swans, pelicans, native ducks and cormorants, the black and whites – magpies, currawongs and butcher birds, cockatoos,

corellas and lorikeets, plus our much loved Tawny Frogmouths – not an owl but a member of the Nightjar family.

If you are thinking about feeding native birds, it's really important to understand what each species eats, and try to replicate that diet. For waterbirds it's insects, worms and grubs, seeds, grasses and plant material. The black and whites eat a variety of plants, insects, grubs and worms and the occasional small lizard or mouse. The Tawny frogmouths, owls and raptors are carnivores – they will clean up your mice and rats for you so please don't use rat poison as this will kill a bird that has eaten a poisoned rodent.

It's also extremely important not to feed bread or mince to birds. Neither are part of their natural diet; both bread and mince have very little nutritional value and both can lead to numerous complications. Feeding bread to waterbirds can cause a condition called Angel Wing where the bird's feathers grow outwards and the bird is unable to fly. Mince on its own has high levels of phosphate and can cause calcium deficiencies in a bird's beak and bones. Raw meat can expose birds to parasites so it needs to be frozen prior to feeding to carnivorous species.

Better still, create your own wildlife friendly garden by growing native plants that provide flowers, fruits, leaves and grasses that local wildlife will be drawn to, and enjoy watching wildlife in your own natural environment!

**\*Deb Seal**, Secretary/Treasurer,  
Australian Native Animals Rescue and  
Rehabilitation Association (ANARRA)

## Conservation is Complex

**As time goes by, we are discovering that conserving an endangered turtle species is far more complex than it first appeared.**

To date, our main strategy has been in-situ protection of the nests of the Mary River turtle. Without protection, almost 100% of nests would be predated. This program has been very successful in significantly reducing the predation of eggs and hatchlings. Nest protection is an established turtle conservation technique and is widely used throughout the world.

However, an extensive mark and recapture study done over three years in the Mary River found very few turtles younger than 15 years of age despite our nest protection program producing thousands of young turtles.

**It was thought that many decades of nests being predated was the main cause for the massive decline in the turtle population.**

While on one hand this is disappointing news for Tiaro Landcare, it has spurred us on to discover and solve the next threat. Predated eggs scattered on the river bank are easily seen, but what is happening underwater is far less obvious and a much greater challenge.

We enlisted the help of researchers from Charles Darwin University to find out why there is such a high mortality of young turtles in the river. Head-starting is a strategy used worldwide for fisheries and is used locally for the Mary River cod. This technique hopes to improve their survivorship in their natural environment by giving them a head start over the stage of a turtle's life where they have the highest mortality.

Image of Marilyn with turtle,  
WorldAtlas.com



Turtles were grown up for 15 months under permits from the Queensland Government. Small transmitters were put on them before the turtles were released into the river. Over the next six months we will be monitoring these turtles to understand what is killing those that don't survive.

The very small sonic tags that were attached to the turtles transmit underwater a high frequency pulse that gives us an identification number (every tagged turtle has a unique number). This pulse is picked up on underwater receivers. The very smart thing about these underwater transmitters is that if the turtles and the tag are eaten, say by a large catfish or eel, the little tag gets triggered by the digestive juices of the fish and flicks over the code sent by the tag and tells us it has been eaten by a fish.

So, this study will tell us if the turtles are dying because there is not enough food in the river or if they are being eaten by fish. This is the first time this technology has been trialled in Australia.

## *Conservation is Complex continued from previous page*

This research program wouldn't be possible without financial contributions from all those people who buy our chocolate turtles (available from Tiaro Meats & Bacon and the Tiaro Craft Cottage), the Foundation for Australia's Most Endangered (FAME), SunWater, Fraser Coast Council, Burnett Mary Regional Group, Mary River Catchment Co-ordinating Committee, Charles Darwin University and huge assistance from Wide Bay Seedlings and their staff.

Local media were at the release to record the release of the young tagged turtles.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/widebay/programs/breakfast/bum-breathing/13425526>

or watch the news story on Channel Seven <https://fb.watch/6sSdLhmVhc/>

**\*Marilyn Connell,  
Project Leader, Tiaro Landcare**

## **Library Talk 14 May—Vanishing Birds**

On the 14 May, library talks resumed at the Hervey Bay and Maryborough libraries commencing with an excellent video recorded by Alan Peebles who has been recording bird activity and song in the Fraser Coast region for 20 years.

Over the period of Alan's observations, some bird species are no longer seen due to vegetation clearing and the use of pesticides. Many of the birds are seasonal visitors, and many local residents, but the main attraction is the availability of food for them. We can ensure their continued survival and enjoy their daily company by assisting with flower and seed producing tree and bush plantings (especially native flora) and provision of fresh water in our gardens and yards.

The video shown captured a wide variety of bird species, common and rare, inclusive of local water birds, visiting

migratory birds, and rare glimpses of fairy wrens and even bower birds. There were some splendid recordings of nest building and feeding of juvenile birds.

The Glossy Black-cockatoo, now rare and endangered, visits to dine on casuarina forests, inland from the coastline.



Most of Alan's video recordings are available for loan at the Hervey Bay library and titles are :

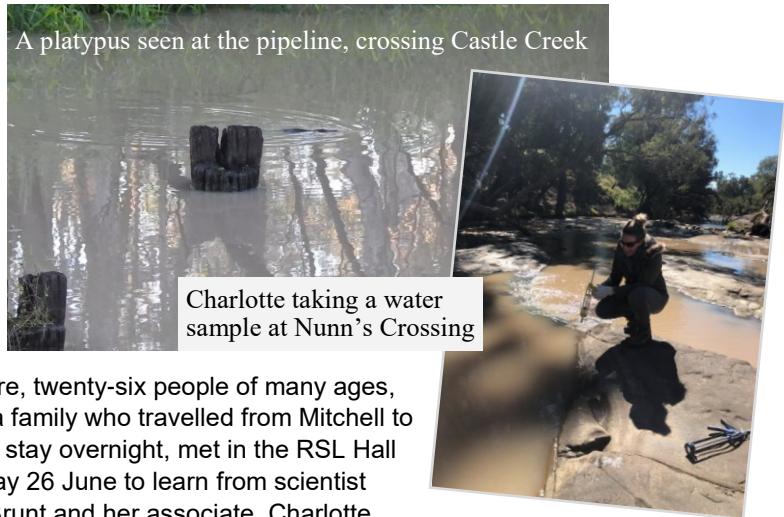
- Birdwatching Around Hervey Bay
- City of Birds / Hervey Bay
- Birds of Arkarra
- Black Breasted Button Quail.

**\*Jackie Henrion**

"Meet 5 of Australia's tiniest mammals, who tread a tightrope between life and death every night" — <https://theconversation.com/meet-5-of-australias-tiniest-mammals-who-tread-a-tightrope-between-life-and-death-every-night-159239>

## THEODORE PEOPLE GO WILD FOR PLATYPUS

Two PlatypusWatch in the Upper Dawson Workshops, one in Theodore and one in Taroom were held in June providing insights into our iconic platypus, and information about Wildlife Queensland's PlatypusWatch environmental DNA project in the Dawson River.



In Theodore, twenty-six people of many ages, including a family who travelled from Mitchell to join in and stay overnight, met in the RSL Hall on Saturday 26 June to learn from scientist Tamielle Brunt and her associate, Charlotte, how to collect water samples to test for platypus DNA.

Separating the DNA from the mud in the water requires serious pressure, provided by a seriously technical device called a glue gun in combination with a syringe and filter that traps the DNA and excludes the mud.

It will be a while before the test results come back from the laboratory, but on the next day, those who rose early enough got immediate proof : two platypuses turned up just for the occasion next morning in Castle Creek.

Some locals went off with their newly acquired devices to take samples of the river and its tributaries on their properties.

Rose guided the scientists to Moura and back, sampling Lonesome Creek, and diverting to the river at the Kianga and Nunn's crossings.

Travelling back to Taroom, Tam & Charlotte diverted to pick up samples from Southend and Irontate. They'll be back some time to collect more samples from the willing citizen scientists along this stretch of the river.

Great response, Theodore (and Mitchell) citizen scientists!

**\*Ann Hobson—Upper Dawson Branch**

Further information <https://wildlife.org.au/platypuswatch/> or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PlatypusConservationNetwork>.

## Library Talk 18 July—Common Reptiles of the Fraser Coast

In a very interesting and informative presentation, Chris Muller warns to never rely on colour in order to identify a snake species. Typical colouring can change during the course of a year, depending on the season. Chris has been researching snakes since he was a boy and has many years of field experience. He now applies his practical experience and knowledge, capturing and rescuing snakes for CJM Wildlife Services.

Some of the most common species to be found in the region include:

### NON-VENOMOUS

- Burton's Snake Lizard: Has very small ears attached to the jawline and rudimentary legs. Docile but can bite.
- Carpet Python: Docile but can bite.
- Children's Python: Grows to maximum length of 1 metre.

### MILDLY VENOMOUS

- Freshwater Keelback: Semi aquatic and will eat cane toads.
- Green Tree Snake.
- Brown Tree Snake: Rare .
- Marsh Snake.
- White-crowned Snake.

### VENOMOUS SNAKES

- Eastern Brown Snake: Can be identified by orange flecks on belly.
- Coastal Taipan Snake: Rare.
- Death Adder: Very rare. Bears live young. Has the fastest strike and is only 10-50cm long but has long fangs.
- Red-bellied Black Snake: Bears live young. Sometimes does not display a red belly but its back is usually totally black.
- Rough-scaled Snake: Extremely venomous and bears live young. Very similar in appearance to Keelback but Keelback lays eggs.
- Yellow-faced Whip Snake: Common.
- Small-eyed Snake: Similar to Red-bellied Black Snake and also bears live young.

Snake bites are often dry bites as they conserve venom for use on prey food, venom being part of their digestive system. However, it is always best to be cautious and treat all snake bites inflicted on large predators as possibly injecting some venom.

Our Branch produced an informative brochure on snakes, pointing out that of 3000-4000 bites per annum, less than 10% are envenomed.

Remember, snakes, if left alone, have no reason to attack humans. If a snake is located in your house or garden, ensure a path is cleared to an opening, gate or door and stand clear.

If you need to remove a snake from your property, remember it is illegal and dangerous to try to kill a snake. Call a wildlife expert (such as Chris) for safe removal of the animal.

In conclusion, Chris says it is becoming more difficult to relocate snakes without longer distance travel to bush land due to increasing habitat destruction.

### **\*Jackie Henrion.**



From the Branch brochure

## Bat Day at Pialba State School

### Some student comments:

**Charlie:** *The bat day was so informative! We loved going to the park and participating in the fun activities.*

**Jesse:** *I really enjoyed the bat walk and talk. I learnt so much new stuff and the activities were lots of fun.*

**Dakota:** *What a great day! Even the walk in the rain was ok. I loved the YouTube clips and the games at the park.*



Tuesday, 22 June dawned fine and sunny as the education team consisting of Lesley Bradley, Jane Barnes and I prepared for a morning of bat education for 48 Year Five students at the Pialba State School. The students visited two learning hubs, one a PowerPoint presentation on flying foxes and micro bats and the other, a demonstration of how echolocation works. The newly acquired tuning forks proved to be the most efficient resource when it came to explaining this difficult concept. The resulting turbulent waves within basins of water astounded and delighted.

After morning break, the students supervised by staff, walked to Tooan Tooan Creek Bat Colony. On arriving, John Parsons identified the masses of flying foxes roosting in the trees across the Esplanade. School excursions have not always coincided with the bats being "in residence".

The students then enjoyed a series of three activities: the pollination game, which never fails to excite, a nature bingo activity and the beetle and berry hunt. John was assisted by Jane and Linden Ashton, who as supervisors, made sure no mischievous 'bats' skipped any flowering trees in the pollination cycle. We added sea eagles and powerful owls, the predators, as a challenging twist to the original game.

All ran smoothly until the last rotation when a sudden downpour caused us to shelter in the sheds until the rain abated. A happy group of students, somewhat damp, and relieved staff then trekked back to school, hopefully knowing more about flying foxes than they had before.

\***Diane Christensen**

Anyone wishing to join the education team is welcome. Teaching experience would be appreciated but not essential. A blue card is mandatory.

Phone Diane on 0418 884 917.

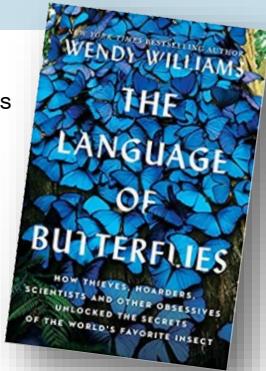
## BOOK REVIEW

### THE LANGUAGE OF BUTTERFLIES

HOW THIEVES, HOARDERS, SCIENTISTS AND OTHER OBSESSIVES UNLOCKED THE SECRETS OF THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE INSECT

This book is a riveting read in which the reader, if not already a butterfly enthusiast, will surely become entranced by the wonderful world of Lepidoptera.

The author Wendy Williams is an American Science journalist whose budding interest in butterflies has taken her all around the world.



In this book she writes about the obsessive lives of butterfly enthusiasts through the centuries, paying special tribute to an uneducated seventeenth century girl from Frankfurt, Maria Sibylla Merian, who at age thirteen fell in love with caterpillars, following them through their life cycle and recording her research in notebooks detailing the lives of caterpillars, moths and their favourite plants. She completed her meticulous drawings with watercolour. Her first of many books was published in 1679.

William's book primarily focuses on the lives and properties of monarch butterflies (sometimes called Wanderers) and how they accomplish the mass migration from Canada and North America to the jungles of Mexico where they overwinter, and explores the mystery of how they arrived in Australia and occasionally in Britain.

There is much to learn in this delightful book. In 1978 the mountaineer Rick Ridgeway was one of a group of four climbers to successfully complete the ascent and safe return of the mountain K2 in Pakistan, a rare accomplishment. At

an altitude of over twenty thousand feet a butterfly landed near their rope in a blaze of colour. They wondered if they were hallucinating at that altitude. They took photos. The butterfly was a Painted Lady. Painted Ladies live in almost all parts of the world but differ slightly on each continent. Read on to discover more!

**\*Ruby Rosenfield**

*image left—Painted Lady by Ruby*



"Next time you see a butterfly, treasure the memory: scientists raise alarm on these 26 species" — <https://theconversation.com/next-time-you-see-a-butterfly-treasure-the-memory-scientists-raise-alarm-on-these-26-species-159798>



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 our local rescue service.

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

### For all wildlife

**WILDLIFE RESCUE FRASER COAST** Phone 4121 3146 (24 hrs)

**FRASER COAST WILDLIFE** Phone 0477189221 (24 hrs)

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

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

**For snakes CJM WILDLIFE SERVICES** 0409474440

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