

CONSERVATION NEWS
Aug-Sept 2022

August & September meetings:
Executive Monday 15 August &
19 September 1 pm at
President Anne's house

General meeting Wednesday
17 August & 21 September, 1
pm, Caloundra Power Boat
Club, Golden Beach

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News*



From the June & July Exec & General Meetings

Appropriate design and development to protect sea turtle nesting and hatching

At the suggestion of member Claire, the meeting voted to seek the commitment of the Sunshine Coast Council CEO, Mayor and Councillors to the adoption and implementing of the new State Planning Policy Sea Turtle Sensitive Area Code: a model code for Local Government.

The code is to ensure that development does not create harm to sea turtle nesting and sea turtle activity, and specifies avoiding adverse impacts generated from artificial lighting, including outside lighting, reflective glare and interior lighting, that may illuminate the beach, ocean or sky at night. Development must provide for landscape buffers that protect the edges of existing native vegetation or any other areas of environmental significance, and screen the development (including associated artificial light) to a level where it is not visible from the beach or ocean. Development involving sport and recreation activities must also avoid new floodlighting (which, the meeting noted, rules out changes to the Stadium lights at Kawana). And good luck to Council staff interpreting this clause:

'No new beach access points are established unless the beach access is designed to reduce interference on turtle nesting areas, and:

(a) is required to enhance public access to the beach or

(b) there is no increase in the number of beach access points, with any replaced beach accesses fenced off and revegetated.'

Member survey: SurveyMonkey elicited 11 replies! And these included six respondents from the previous version. Maybe the medium isn't the message. So – re Executive meeting attendance and minutes, most respondents are already on the Executive, some noting that content of these meetings is included in the general meeting Agenda and discussions. Wednesday afternoons remain the favoured meeting time, with a high preference for indoor COVID-safe venues, although any private or public, indoor or outdoor space was considered suitable. Zoom is an option, for special circumstances, with the caveat that it may hold difficulties for some members. More than half respondents liked the idea of meetings being held outside Caloundra, and of sharing refreshments during or

Advance Dates

Monday 15 August (TBC) & 19 September, 1 pm: Executive Meetings at venue to be notified (please come along if you'd like to contribute).

Wednesday 17 August & 21 September, 1 pm
General meetings, Caloundra Power Boat Club, Golden Beach

Wildflower Festival dates

Saturday 20 August: Ben Bennett Bushland Park

Tuesday 23 August: Mangrove boardwalk at Golden Beach

Thursday 1 September: Isabel Jordan Bushland Reserve

Saturday 3 September: Currimundi (Kathleen McArthur) Conservation Park

Bookings [here](#)

or search online for Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival

Sunday 28 August: Climate Watch Trail launch at Currimundi Lake (details TBA)

Sunday 4 September, 9 am to 3.30 pm: Launch of Backyards for Biodiversity SEQ Inc. and the start of their National Biodiversity Month, at Fairhill Native Botanic Gardens, 114-132 Fairhill Road, Yandina
Join guided themed walks looking for birds, plants and butterflies and butterfly plants. Speakers include former Noosa Mayor and current naturalist Tony Wellington, and others on native plants, Backyards for Biodiversity, butterflies and hollow-dependent fauna. There will be displays and raffles and native plants for purchase.

Friday 9 to Monday 12 September: three-day event WQ state AGM and Southern Branches get-together:
These excellent networking and informative get-togethers of Head Office and state branches

after a meeting, on occasion. Skill and interest focused on wildflowering and Clean Up Australia, followed by Faunawatch walks, dune care and general assistance with any activity, then birds, animals & insects, conservation reserves and bush regeneration, with turtle care, other plants and fungi and specific habitats or ecosystems following. Skills and interest in plant propagation at 18% was the lowest score. Interest in assisting with specific operations tasks revealed that members all have a high level of commitments in other areas of life, but that there are those who are happy to contribute to WPSQ events (ongoing and one-off), book sales, submission writing, Facebook, photographic and other assistance for *Conservation News* and recording of branch activities, and branch archive contribution and maintenance. Future nomination for Executive or other positions recorded mostly 'none of the above', with just a few putting a hand up for continuing in existing roles. Further comments highlighted the need for attracting members – including young people, men, retirees, empty-nesters – and that a meeting could be dedicated to brainstorming ways of achieving this goal. Further comment noted that simpler list-type agenda for review and discussion could make lighter work of meeting preparation and consideration at meetings.

Discussion of the survey results, presented at the July meeting, considered the importance of adding depth to meetings and attracting attendance with guest speakers and other presentations. While the best laid plans to set up talks can go awry due to the demands of others' busy lives, the Executive welcomes initiatives from members in organising presentations.

Issues and events

Bribie Island breakthrough

Heavy weather didn't deter a good turnout of keen locals at VP Sue's excellent presentation of an illustrated historical overview of the changes to the northern tip of Bribie Island since the late 19th century, the forces that led to this January's dramatic breakthrough, and the effects on local ecology. Research was a shared effort with Ken Mewburn (TAPP), local image collector John Groves, and others, and Noosa Parks Association hosted the event at their Friday Forum of 22 July. Jason Hunt's (Caloundra MLA) Office has suggested we might like to repeat the presentation in Caloundra and have offered their assistance with publicity. We hope to make the Powerpoint available for viewing on the Wildlife Qld website.

John Groves' latest book, on this subject, is now available at The Bookshop in Caloundra.

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

Despite a meeting on the CTCU in May with State Transport & Main Roads, there is no word on the establishment of a Community Reference Group (said to include Value Caloundra,

are resuming post-COVID! This year we're meeting at Advancetown, west of the Gold Coast, near Canungra and the gateway to the Lamington Plateau. Members will have received notification from Head Office with the program, booking information and accommodation options at Cedar Lake Country Resort.

16 September until 3 October: From 500 entries, the winners will be announced at an exhibition of the 40 Wild HeART Student Art Prize finalists at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanical Gardens. We are looking for volunteers to help 'mind' the show. Time slots are 10 am to noon, and noon to 2 pm. Look for an email from Jude and enjoy a day at the Gardens, with plenty of time for a walk and picnic lunch.

<https://botanic-garden.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/See-and-do/Wild-HeART-Student-Art-Prize>

Faunawatch Outings

26 September, 8 am
La Balsa Park, Buddina.
Pt Cartwright is one place where we often see Fairy Gerygones, and this month will be the peak for Humpback Whales passing as they move back to Antarctica. There is action to get greater protection for this forest, so join us for an easy walk along the headland.
Meeting Point: A parking bay is located at La Balsa Park at the corner of Harbour Pde & Gulai St, Buddina.

24 October, 8 am
Floydia Nature Reserve, West Woombye.

Caloundra Residents Association & WPSQ), and although Terms of Reference for the options analysis will not be released publicly (as advised by Jason Hunt's office) we are awaiting confirmation that two lanes as well as four will be included in these Terms, and also that Jason will give favourable consideration to the inclusion of a 2-lanes option.

World Environment Day (the extended version across June and July):

WPSQ shared a stall with Take Action for Pumicestone Passage at **Central Park at Pelican Waters** on Sunday 5 June. Despite low public attendance (which allowed fruitful networking among the environment and community groups), we sold copies of Piece by piece and Kathleen McArthur's wildflower cards. Sue connected with staff from the Golden Beach State School, who are keen to set up a butterfly garden in school grounds, and member Jenny later provided information about suitable plants and activities at the Mooloolah River Catchment Nursery at Glenview.

At the self-guided walk at Bancroft's Red Gum Environmental Reserve on 26 June, WPSQ members assisted Currimundi Catchment Care Group. From their list we flagged the selected and diverse species, now self-regenerating in this low-lying area nine years after the initial plantings. Enthusiastic young local participants, interested in the chance to win an e-scooter after completing the plant ID path and a questionnaire, sat in the gutter enjoying their sausage sizzle while reading their free copies of *Wildlife Australia* magazine.

We again appreciated the opportunity to share a stall with TAPP on 17 July at the **Aura Environment Day** at Baringa Forest Park. The event signalled Susie Chapman's last day before retirement in her role co-ordinating the Aura Community Reference Group for Healthy Land and Water/Stockland; her guidance and energy will be missed! Walks through the Blackbutt Forest were enthusiastically taken up, led by Faunawatch's Rob Kernot and ecologist Rob Lamont. Despite a small turnout of locals (not a lot of publicity by Stockland) there was excellent entertainment by Lyndon Davis and his dancers, other singers, as well as a strong Council presence – Bushcare (with plant giveaways), Waste Management, Responsible Pet Ownership, and First Five Forever (storytime for the very young). Other environmental groups included Mooloolah River Landcare with a 'water critters' display and Barung Landcare promoting Gardens for Wildlife. Kim Moreland's workshop for children and adults saw Eastern Curlews fly off her printing blocks.

Currimundi Climate Watch Trail

Sue, Ros, Jude and Helen attended a further walk-through of the Currimundi Lake Climate Watch Trail on 6 July with Currimundi Catchment Care Group members and a Sunshine Coast Council officer. A public launch is planned for Sunday 28

Floydia is a 34-ha site that was originally cleared farmland. After revegetation works it now consists of low open forest and lowland subtropical rainforest. With 300 species of plants it will be good to see what fauna we can find.

Meeting Point: Meet us on White Cedar Place, 300 m past Menary Lane.

**28 November, 8 am
Blackbutt Forest, Aura.**

This is a really interesting forest on the coast. We have currently identified over 70 species here and it should be active at this time of year, particularly with a good chance of hearing acid frogs in the neighbouring low areas.

Meeting Point: Meet in the car park next to the playground and dog park towards the end of Eden Drive, Baringa (Aura).

**Second Wednesday Walks,
8 am at Maroochy Regional
Bushland Botanic Gardens
continue 10 August, 14
September, 12 October, 9
November.**

Good Reads

SOS: save our species: a call for help from our Australian wildlife

Mary Cairncross was the sympathetic venue for the launch of this excellent small book, for all ages. Elaine Green wrote the spritely text accompanying Jim Cox's beautiful and quirky artworks. Books are available for \$20/\$25 with part of the proceeds supporting the work of the Friends of Mary Cairncross.

Google Jim Cox Montville to view samples of the illustrations and words on Jim's website.

August, and we may participate although the project is not fully operational, with the Currimundi trail (to date) not yet available on the downloadable app. Council is installing species information signs on the Trail along the south and north sides of Currimundi Lake, east of the Nicklin Way bridge.

Faunawatch

Paul brought footage to the July meeting from the Land for Wildlife survey cameras located near Belli and other areas of the Sunshine Coast, showing action shots of an echidna, an antechinus, a swamp wallaby and a phascogale (a marsupial carnivore with a brush tail), as well as koala movement detected only by the expert eye. Ferals featured were a fox, a pig, and a 'Monarch' deer, sporting antlers each with nine branches.

The Faunawatch walk at Lamerough Creek (Tweddell Drive, Pelican Waters) followed the creek into the Environmental Reserve, with its mix of paperbark and eucalypt forest producing a count of 41 species (not the usual higher count), including the Striated Heron (see Robyn's Birds below). The current Land for Wildlife surveys funded by Council's grant have been completed, and preparations are being made by Council staff for 25 properties for the 2022/23 period, with accounting present in the Council budget. Surveys and acquittal for the previous grant are due by the end of August. The Stockland community grant in Aura's Blackbutt forest is continuing.

Kangaroos: Sunshine Coast Council has announced funding in this budget for a Macropod Conservation Plan, and Elaine reported that Beth Brunton has undertaken studies for Council and that SCEC's Narelle McCarthy is in conversation with Council on this issue. WPSQ will communicate our support for this Plan.

Faunawatch walks: See **Advance Dates** for details of changed September, October and November locations (none in August due to the Wildflower Festival walks, except at the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanical gardens, where the monthly Wednesday walks continue).

Other matters

Point Cartwright Care Group

Member Quentin presented information at the June and July meetings on behalf of the Pt Cartwright Care Group about the need for recognition of 1000 m² of littoral rainforest at Point Cartwright. Littoral rainforest is listed as Critically Endangered under the Commonwealth EPBC Act, and the Group is concerned that Council's Point Cartwright Reserve and La Balsa Park Master Plan 2021-2041 may prioritise recreational space, and is lobbying Council to acknowledge the Indigenous heritage and environmental significance. Two stands of littoral rainforest are split by historical mining operations and their joining would allow the restoration of an historic water hole. Quentin's recent presentation to the Sunshine Coast Council's CEO focused on town planning,

Elaine Green's *Piece by piece: conservation and development on the Sunshine Coast 1969-2020*

Catch up at a meeting or Faunawatch outing and buy your copy for just \$35.

Can't make it to a meeting or outing? Wildlife Qld is selling Elaine's book on their website and will post you a copy.

The Bookshop at Caloundra has stock: Ph: 54 91 4836) as do the native plant nurseries at Mooloolah River Landcare, Florabunda, Coolum Native Plants, and the centre at Mary Cairncross Reserve. Or ask at your local bookshop; we are ready to stock their shelves in response to demand.

The Treeline: the last forest and the future of life on earth
by Ben Rawlence, Jonathan Cape, 2022

Here's a climate change story – a trip around the arctic circle by tree, with good science, an adventurous traveller's eye and an understanding of the depth of connection of First People dependent on the arctic forests that form the world's second largest biome. Rawlence focuses on the endemic tree species of Scots pine, birch, larch, poplar, spruce and rowan and their locations in Scotland, northern Scandinavia, Siberia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland. And did you know that the Scots pine east of the Cairngorms in Scotland originated in Ukraine, and that on the western side DNA reveals an origin in Portugal?

biosphere status and biodiversity. The Wandering Tattler and Fairy Gerygone are two bird species that frequent this area, and Paul noted that the Fairy Gerygone is not found in many other areas on the Coast. The group is also benchmarking other local councils along the east coast of Australia to see how they are preserving their littoral rainforest.

If you have not already signed the Change.org petition, here is the link, with more information on the values of this area:

<https://www.change.org/p/save-point-cartwright>

Note that Paul has slotted in an important Faunawatch walk to this area in September. Details are in **Advance Dates**.

Climate Risk Roundtable workshop: Following the joint Council recent declaration of a climate emergency, Sunshine Coast and Noosa Councils are working towards a Regional Climate Action Roadmap. The intent of the Roadmap is to share information to:

- enable climate-ready councils
- empower climate-ready communities, and
- advocate for a climate-ready region.

The Climate Risk pilot has been funded by the State Department of Environment and Science with the aim of increasing the capacity and capability of local government to deal with climate change. Members Ros and Jennie attended on our behalf, and prepared this report on the second workshop on 21 July:

Sunshine Coast Council's Sustainability Officer Jillian Smith and consultants presented their **analysis of discussion from the first Roundtable workshop**, which brought together 90 organisations representing a wide spectrum of interests. Smith's pilot team has also discussed disaster scenarios with senior and other staff from both councils, with an initial scenario of 500 mm rainfall in 48 hours in 2024 and a predicted cost of \$1.3b in damage and disruption. The reality in fact occurred earlier this year, with even more rain and damage. Other scenarios included a windstorm with \$1.8b cost and fires resulting in 50 deaths. Across chronic vs disaster categories, particularly with pervasive heat and drought involved, the analysis identified the impact on:

- council staff (their health and wellbeing)
- council assets (more rapid deterioration)
- council services (disruption to water, power, transport and waste management)
- community services (disruption to, eg, libraries).

Considerations identified by staff concerned:

1. Buildings and places in which we live, work and play, noting
 - the legacy of historical developments in the wrong places
 - new developments not appropriate for climate change

Street Trees

Jenny reported that Sunshine Coast Council staff are extremely prompt and helpful in planting new street trees at the request of residents, and suggests that members may wish to submit their own requests. Up for review next year is the 2017 *Sunshine Coast Council Street Tree Master Plan*, which is worth a look at for its initiative in guidance for selection, placement and care of street trees, the benefits of trees, the positive relationship between trees and ambient urban temperatures, and the role of trees in a changing climate:

<https://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Council/Planning-and-Projects/Council-Plans/Street-Tree-Master-Plan>

Best wishes to Committee member John Roberts for a speedy recovery after further surgery for a back injury that has not slowed down his participation in branch events and business.

- property prices and coastal population growth exacerbating risks and limiting options to adapt
- risk reduction measures not affordable for all.

2. Approaches to managing risks

What isn't working:

- planning on the run
- 'set and forget' (develop a strategy or action and never revisit it)
- single-hazard scenarios
- business as usual

What we need:

- learning from the past
- adaptive, flexible, iterative plans and actions
- big-picture, integrated system views
- identification of barriers created by others, eg, state and federal legislation
- collaborative, multi-stakeholder solutions
- leadership for transformative change
- clear standards, consistently adhered to
- consistent approach across councils, adhered to in all decisions

As part of the process Sunshine Coast and Noosa Councils are developing and implementing a Kids in Action program.

The Powerpoint presentation containing all the above information and more will be available once the Councils have signed off the content.

Can we hope that these aspirations for a well-functioning future on the Coast imply a well-functioning natural environment with a place for wildlife as well as humans.

Say 'No' to private development in the Cooloola Section of Great Sandy National Park

Wildlife Qld has been fighting the battle to maintain the cardinal principle of national parks – the preservation of biodiversity – for many years. Other groups and individuals are onside, in particular against the Ecotourism Trails Project being steered by the Queensland Department of Tourism, allowing commercial interests to lease a 5000 m² site for private development of ten luxury units with ensuites as well as amenities buildings, overlooking Lake Poona in Cooloola.

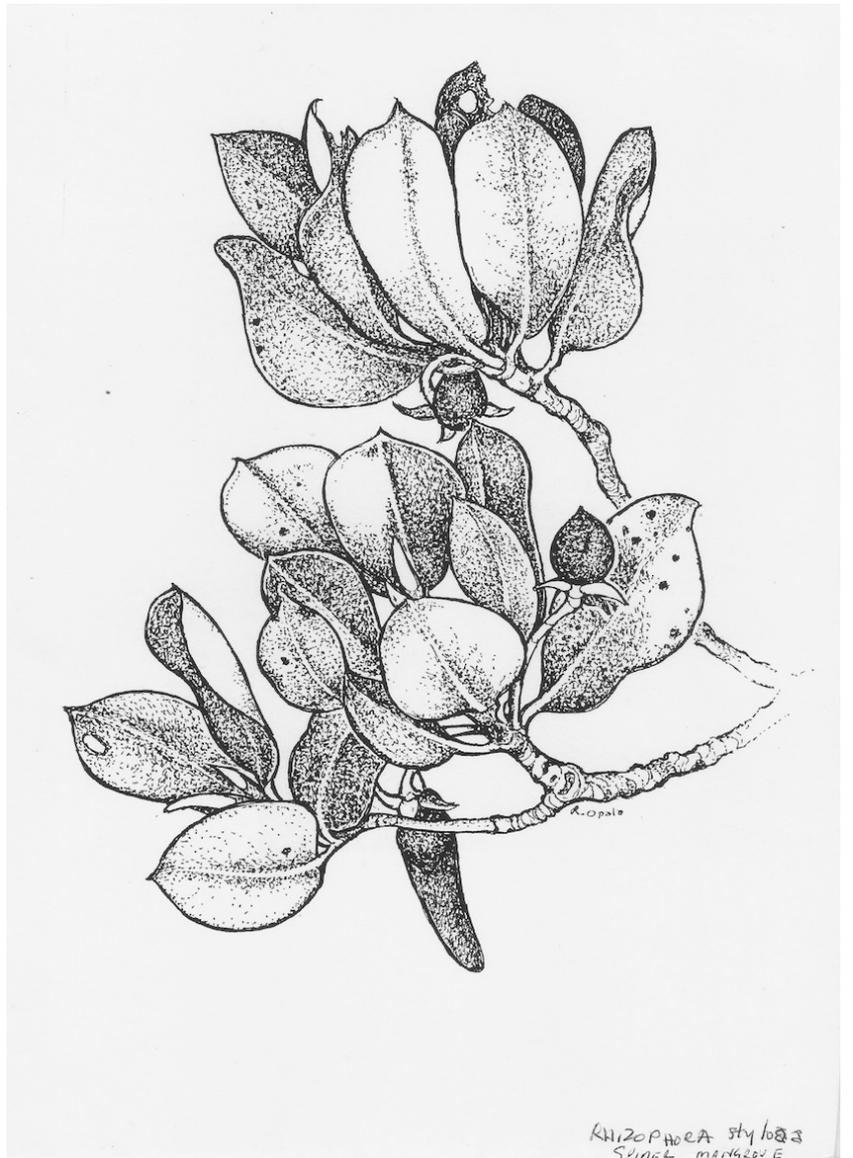
Rainbow Beach conservationist Greg Wood has set up a website, Protect our Parks, with a link to a Change.org petition and is looking for 15,000 signatures:

<https://www.change.org/p/meaghan-scanlon-qld-minister-for-environment-and-science-stop-private-development-within-queensland-s-national-parks>



Lake Poona: image Australian Rainforest Conservation Society

Some years ago our branch was given sketches by **Rosemary Opala** (née Fielding) (1923-2008), a friend of Kathleen McArthur and other members. An artist as well as an environmentalist, Rosemary wrote illustrated articles for *Wildlife Australia Magazine*, the *Sunshine Coast Daily* (with a regular column called *Watch*), *Eco Echo* (the quarterly magazine published by SCEC), *The Queensland Naturalist* (Official Journal of the Queensland Naturalist Club Inc.), and the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland Bayside Newsletter (Source: Wikipedia). Here is one of her exquisite ink drawings of *Rhizophora stylosa*, also known as the Spider mangrove, a fitting introduction to our Wildflower Festival mangrove walk to be led by our expert Sue Aspland.



The Striated heron, *Butorides striata*, Race macrorhynchus grey form, is a secretive, stocky bittern-like heron of 45-50 cm. The macrorhynchus race is found around tidal strips with mudflats and oyster-beds and adjoining mangrove wetlands from the eastern edge of the Gulf of Carpentaria to southern NSW. The heron emerges at low tide to forage along pools and channels of mudflats, and flies low with fast-beating rounded wings. They mostly call during the mating and nesting season unless alarmed, and the local breeding season of August to December produces 3 to 4 eggs, incubated for 21-25 days before the chicks emerge to clamber onto nearby branches.

The grey morph that we saw at Lamerough Creek Environmental Reserve has a grey face, with throat and neck streaked centrally in black, dark brown and white. Dark grey upperparts have a metallic green sheen and underparts are pink-brown to grey. Wings are also green-grey, with each feather outlined in yellow. The eye is yellow outlined with dark grey, the bill is black and the legs and feet are orange in breeding season, otherwise dull yellow.

Because of its secretive nature, we were very fortunate to see this bird. My first photo of the Striated heron, skulking in the mangroves foraging for its food, was from a small boat along Oxley Creek in Brisbane and then from the esplanade at Wynnum, where one was silently creeping along in a hunched posture, with the head and neck drawn back into its body, the bill horizontal to the mud, stalking its prey of fish, crabs and other marine invertebrates as the tide receded.

The Lamerough Creek Environmental Reserve walk emphasised for me the importance of these regenerated reserves of forest for the survival of wildlife.

Birds with Robyn Pugh



Visit **Wildlife Queensland's** excellent updated website, with our events included amongst many other workshops (some online) within reach of our Sunshine Coast members:

www.wildlife.org.au

Subscribe for free to Wildlife Queensland's monthly enews: <https://www.wildlife.org.au/news-events/subscribe/>

Celebrate National Science Week (August 13-21) and vote in the ABC's 'Australia's most loved native tree species' ballot. Their panel of experts has come up with a longlist of 33 – beautiful, iconic, unusual, and useful – trees.

You can choose up to three trees in the first round of voting finishing on 11 August, vote again on the Top 20, then the Top 10, with the winning tree announced on Friday 26 August.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2022-07-29/vote-for-your-favourite-australian-native-tree/101210764>

And in the words of one Radio National listener last week, 'Watch out for branch stacking'.