

Upper Dawson WPSQ August Newsletter

Compiled by Ann Hobson; Photos Helen Keys

Please email upperdawson@wildlife.org.au if you'd like to join us, raise an issue, or share a discovery or observation.



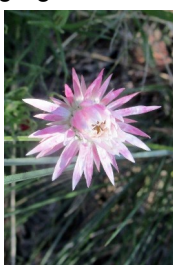
The glossy quills on these well-fed but camera-shy Aussies attest to a bountiful winter season.

Cool weather has been interspersed by light rain events, and the steady approach of longer days has brought the first hatchings of midges, moths, and mossies. Apart from the Caper White butterfly, few butterflies are to be seen. Cereal crops are doing well, with some early plantings already safely out of the shot blade and the danger of a late frost. Fishermen tell me that fish have so much to eat in the water that they aren't tempted by bait. Platypus are seen in numbers in the river, presumably also enjoying the boost in aquatic life as they filter mud and water for worms and other delicious invertebrates.

With another La Nina possible later in the year, it may be a good time to plan for the next drought. Government assistance is now being focused on preparedness to avoid the heavy toll on the nation's finances taken by expensive 'drought recovery' funding. For details on how to participate in available schemes, please contact Bronwyn Schultz at the Rural Financial Counselling & Support Service Qld. - 0448 124 016 - Bronwyn.Schultz@rfcssq.org.au Web: <http://www.rfcssq.org.au/>



Those joining us at Isla Gorge 20th August, were greeted by the vibrant red *Grevillea longistyla*, and the near-threatened Cracow wattle (*A. calantha*) like yellow flames against the western sky at the edge of the gorge. Rewarding a closer



look were paper daisies, <-and quinine berry ->



Other flowering plants included “eggs & bacon” (bitter pea), purple bush pea (*Hovea*), iron bark, yellow jacket, and Guinea flower (*Hibbertia sp.*), along with the sparsely flowering rush-leaf wattle (*A. juncifolia*) whose seed pods were beginning to emerge like wriggly red worms out of its fading flower-balls. Isla Gorge’s own wattle, *Acacia islana*, was also a splash of colour in the bush east of the Campground.

Remembering the good work done over several years by the recently re-emerging Dawson Catchment Coordinating Association, our members agreed to support the Board in its efforts to find funding to assist land managers in assessing the impacts of their current practices and planning for continuing soil health, productivity, and sustainability.

Other news is that scientists have begun sampling Upper Dawson River water in light of a Santos proposal to run 15 megalitres of untreated water into the river during times of high flow. This will give a base line for sampling the impact if such a proposal is approved and discharge occurs. There are concerns that possible boron contamination could impact aquatic life at the proposed discharge site and downstream. Two endangered turtles could also be under threat.

Our big event for the year is the Butterfly Weekend 15th October in Taroom, and 16th in Theodore. Please claim the date, and look out for the colourful Butterfly postcard invitations and flyers to be circulated in the coming weeks. You can register now at bit.ly/TaroomButterflies or by email to upperdawson@wildlife.org.au Other details from Viola on 0408 429 711 or Ann 0427 504 560 See flyer below.