

# WAMBALIMAN

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



## THIS ISSUE:

- Branch Activities
- Gatakers Hotel update
- Nature Watch

## STOP PRESS

18 storey resort on Esplanade  
approved by council vote 6:5

*please support us*



Wildlife Fraser Coast  
Member Number: C11242652

## WINTER 2024

**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.



**WILDLIFE PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND**

*known informally as*

**WILDLIFE QUEENSLAND**

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**Library Talks**

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**Bookings**—FCRC website / Library

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**Fraser Coast ESAC rep** Paul Murdoch

**Rail Trail Advisory Group** John W / Tina R

**USC Partnership**

(until completion of the kangaroo project)

Vanessa Elwell-Gavins, Rodney Jones,

Bruce Dick, Cassy Ironside

**Newsletter WAMBALIMAN**

Publisher: WPSQ Fraser Coast Branch

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The Fraser Coast Branch of Wildlife Queensland acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and water in our region; to the east the Butchulla (Badtjala) People, and to the west, the Kabi Kabi (Gubbi Gubbi) People. We pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

# 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 and so on. Send contributions to:

[ggduckz@gmail.com](mailto:ggduckz@gmail.com)

**Submissions for the next issue  
are due by Friday 18 October 2024**

The Editor reserves the right to withhold material from publication and to alter or correct any material which may include but not be limited to spelling, grammar or punctuation mistakes, or re-formatting to fit the space.

*Opinions expressed in Wambaliman are not necessarily those endorsed by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland Fraser Coast Branch unless specifically attributed to them.*

## What's On

### Branch General Meetings

Usually - 3rd Sunday bi-monthly 2:00pm  
Halcro St Community Centre, Pialba  
Next one AGM 15 September

### Branch Executive Meetings

Next one 18 August

State AGM—Saturday, 7 September  
(Karawatha, south of Brisbane)

### WILDLIFE NATURE WALKS

#### 3 August (Saturday) -

Tandora, Koala and Lake Walk

#### 1 September (Sunday) -

Poona Wildflowers

#### 5 October (Saturday) -

Wongi Forest Reserve

### LIBRARY WILDLIFE TALKS 1-2PM

#### 16 AUGUST AT HERVEY BAY

Cetaceans of Hervey Bay  
by Marian Bennett

#### 30 AUGUST AT MARYBOROUGH

Photographing the Fraser  
Coast by Marian Bennett

#### 20 SEPTEMBER AT HERVEY BAY and

#### 27 SEPTEMBER AT MARYBOROUGH

Raptors by Mark Grimsley

FCRC community tree plantings

27 July

HB Botanical Gardens 50th celebration

21 September

### FRASER COAST BACKYARD

## BioBlitz

Spring October 12-13th

Don't forget to LIKE us on

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

Check out our page on

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

## ***From the Editor,***

*After eight years, that included extensive public consultation, the new zoning plan for the Great Sandy Marine Park commenced 21 May. There are new conservation zones around Hervey Bay and more protection for our migratory birds and fish nurseries.*

*The big issue locally at the moment is the pending vote by councillors on the planning application for a 21-storey building on the Esplanade. We don't know how our councillors will vote and what recommendations will be given by the council's planning officers. But we do know the vote at the council meeting on Wednesday 24 July will send a message one way or another to a community divided on the issue, and determine a future for the Bay.*

*Will our councillors adhere to their own Planning Scheme which limits building heights to approximately 6 storeys? Will they be prepared to protect our coral reefs and nesting turtles? Will they preserve our unique foreshore where one can enjoy the beach without being overshadowed by buildings? I am nervous for the future of our natural assets. **✱Jenni***

## **S T O P P R E S S**

### **Council Vote on Hervey Bay Esplanade Resort Application**

A motion to approve the application for the Sheraton Resort (at an amended height of 18 storeys) was passed 6:5 at the council meeting Wednesday 24 July. **Mayor Seymour and Councillors O'Keefe, Cosgrove, Weiland and Govers voted against.** Councillors (Phil) Truscott, (Paul) Truscott, Sanderson, Byrne (the non Hervey Bay Councillors), Faraj and Chapman voted for.

## **Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan**

The new zoning plan for the Great Sandy Marine Park commenced on 21 May 2024. The plan includes a range of changes across the park that will enhance the conservation of its natural and cultural values, address issues identified through the review process and provide a management framework that will support ecological resilience, regional lifestyle and nature-based economic opportunity into the future.

The Great Sandy Marine Park webpages have been updated to provide information on how changes to the zoning plan will apply across all areas of the marine park. The information includes new maps of zones and designated areas, and other important information to consider when entering or using the marine park. These resources are available at [www.qld.gov.au/greatsandymarinepark](http://www.qld.gov.au/greatsandymarinepark).



Wildlife Fraser Coast  
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## Branch Activity Report 21 April - 21 July 2024

### **Branch Meetings**

- General meeting 21 April
- Executive meeting 19 May
- General meeting 16 June - postponed
- Executive meeting 16 June
- General meeting 21 July

### **Other meetings**

- 31 May—Paul & Denis with Cr Cosgrove re Gatakers Hotel
- 19 July—Peter, Jenni & Vanessa - Zoom meeting with HO re WPSQ focus.

### **Gatherings / events**

- 27 April—Peter joined CoralWatch on a boat tour off Hervey Bay
- 5 June - Gathering at Arkarra for lunch to celebrate 80th birthday of long-time valued member Carol Bussey.

### **Submissions**

- 27 May - Emails to Mayor and Councilors regarding DA MCU23/0090 (Sheraton 21-storey high rise).
- 29 May—support for CoralWatch's "Report of Concern" (21-storey)
- various— re Gatakers Hotel proposal

### **Advisory Committee**

- 18 June ESAC (formerly EAG) meeting (see p10)
- 27 June M2BRTAC (Rail Trail)

### **Uni Partnerships**

- Eastern Grey Kangaroo project—due for completion end 2024

### **Walks**

- 5 May (Sunday) - Colliery Circuit
- 1 June (Saturday) - Takura Trails
- 7 July (Sunday) - Fairlies Knob NP

### **Library Talks**

- 19 April & 26 April  
Drinking Water by Annie Newberry
- 17 May & 31 May  
Birdwatching on the Fraser Coast by Ruby Rosenfield
- 21 June & 28 June  
Biodiversity by Rob Loveday
- 19 July & 26 July  
Wildlife Resources by Rob Loveday

### **Winter Backyard Bioblitz**

- Weekend of 13 &14 July

### **Communications**

- Our Facebook page now has 1364 followers
- 25-26 April —  
WAMBALIMAN Autumn distributed (electronic and hardcopy)

### **Wildlife Matters**

#### **Toogoom Chatter & River Heads Review**

- June—Colliery Circuit by Frank Ekin
- July—Takura Trails by Frank Ekin *and* The Dangers of Rodent Bait by Diane Christensen
- Maryborough Sun**
- June (article held over)—  
Swallowtails by Ruby Rosenfield
- July—The Dangers of Rodent Bait by Diane Christensen

### **Fundraising**

- We encourage you to contribute to our container deposit fundraiser.
- This quarter (April—July) we raised \$118.50

## **WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS**

Mick and Ness Lehmann, Christel Schrank

*Four of our Branch's longtime members—  
Tony Bussey, Carol Bussey, Tim Thornton and Denise Young.*



This photo was taken at Arkarra where a group of Branch members belatedly celebrated Carol's 80th birthday. Carol was actually in Tassie in May for her birthday enjoying the company of her daughter with a special treat from the Aurora Australis. Yep, Carol was fortunate enough to see a stunning light show where the southern lights were more visible than on the mainland and not hindered by too much light pollution.

Carol and Tony are making plans to relocate to Tassie in the near future. Both have contributed so much to the success of our Branch. Carol has many things for sale in her endeavour to make the move. Some are listed below.

## **Items for Sale**

**Best bid by 5pm Friday 16 August will be accepted no matter how low.  
Half of total takings to WPSQ.**

- Spotlight bought at Supercheap plus 6V battery in case with strap. Works.
- Snorkel plus flippers plus snorkel - 2 sets (Cost \$90 when new in 2009)
- Field Guide: Mammals of Australia (as new)
- Field Guide: Tracks and Scats
- Sony IC Recorder ICD-Px400. For frogs /birds. Very tiny and takes good recordings. Plus CD "Bird Calls of SEQ"

### **Also to give away.**

Binoculars—Nikon 7x50 Too heavy for bird watching. Need cleaning. Instruction manual. Strap worn through. Plus DVD Australia: Land of Parrots.

Contact Carol [busseyc44@gmail.com](mailto:busseyc44@gmail.com) or 41173483.

## Latest update regarding Gatakers Landing— appeal against provisional grant of a commercial hotel licence

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) decided in early April to adjourn its review of the grant of a provisional Commercial Hotel Licence to a developer on the site of the former Gatakers Landing restaurant. The adjournment was required under the Liquor Act “to allow the commissioner to reconsider the decision together with the new evidence and to allow for further submissions by affected persons”. It followed the Tribunal’s agreeing with applications to have a wide range of ‘new’ documents not previously considered by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR), including affidavits and emails admitted as new evidence in the case.

The evidence covered:

- the mandatory survey of residents undertaken as part of activity to prepare a Community Impact Statement;
- communications between objectors, the (then) local Councillor (D. Lewis) and Council Planning staff including about plans considered, impacts and the basis of exemptions from the Planning Act extended to the developer;
- information obtained from Council as a result of lodging a Right to Information Act request; and
- the size of the licensed area on the site when it operated as a restaurant pre-2018.

Comprehensive submissions were prepared, pointing out that the site had never operated as a hotel, Council had never approved a hotel on the site, and that under the Fraser Coast Planning Scheme 2014 a commercial hotel required an application for a ‘change of use’ to be made by the developer, and approved by Council. OLGR agreement to a hotel licence requires that such a use must be permissible under the planning scheme.

On 21 June 2024, OLGR issued a confused and illogical “further decision” confirming their original decision to provisionally approve the commercial hotel

licence. The next step will be for QCAT to schedule a further Directions Hearing where the arrangements for a full hearing by the Tribunal will be issued. We will be restricted to making submissions on ‘relevant matters’ contained in the Liquor Act, and evidence already before the Tribunal, but will again argue that there is no evidence which could satisfy the Tribunal that use of the site for a commercial hotel is permitted under the Fraser Coast Regional Council planning scheme. If that line of argument is not successful, there are a range of other relevant issues where OLGR ignored submissions and evidence (including evidence from the local State MP and the local OLGR Compliance Branch and raising the serious lack of parking and other foreseeable adverse impacts on amenity which warrant refusing the hotel licence).

We will continue to argue that any approval of a hotel on the site must require the preparation, and consideration of, an Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to the site and its several endangered species – a step which we have proven has never been undertaken since the first commercial use of the site in the 1930s.

✿ **Paul Murdoch**



## ***Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee***

The Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC), formerly the Environment Advisory Group (EAG), met on 18 June. Our Representative Paul Murdoch was overseas and unable to attend and his proxy Peter Duck had work commitments so Frank Ekin again deputised.

There were 10 attendees which included Mayor George and Davendra Naidu, Executive Director Infrastructure Services. Also present was Rosalyn Acworth, Executive Manager Infrastructure Planning. She presented Reef 2050 Plan (2021-2025) defining threats under four headings; climate change, poor water quality, direct human use, coastal development. An outcomes diagram noted five work areas: limit impacts of climate change, reduce impacts from land based activities, reduce impacts of water-based activities, influence the reduction of international sources of impact, and protect, rehabilitate and restore.

There was discussion on the revised terms of reference of the ESAC. Amongst the suggestions were the involvement of other environment community groups (Turtles in Trouble, CoralWatch, Parents for Climate Change), and representation from Department of Environment and Science and/or Marine Parks.

Frank's conclusion is that the ESAC gives our WSPQ Branch formal access to Council and we should "push for actionable decisions and be attentive to measurable goals and targets". 🌟

### **Want to know more about Forest Wind?**

Are you new to the area or seeking an update? Please join us at our upcoming Community Information Sessions.

**Date: Saturday 27th July 2024**

Where: Kia Ora

Drop in any time between 10am and 12 noon

Address: Kia Ora Memorial Hall, 10 Johnston Rd, Kia Ora

Where: Boonooroo

Drop in any time between 2pm and 4pm

Address: Boonooroo Community Hall, 117 Eckert Road, Boonooroo



On 27th April Branch member, Peter, joined Hervey Bay CoralWatch for a snorkel trip looking at the near shore reefs of Torquay beach and Point Vernon. The members of CoralWatch (who spoke at our April meeting) are active in highlighting the value of our local coral reefs which are so close to shore and the effect that high rise development could have on this fragile and important ecosystem.



**Are you interested in being on the walks team in 2025?**  
*Here are some recollections from Frank who has been involved for 5 years.*



On each of the past three years the walks team has had to cancel or postpone a monthly walk because the weather has caused uncertainties about access and convenience of the proposed walk. Nonetheless, these cancellations or postponements are instructive and in themselves are most interesting.

The Fergusson Forest, September 2022, walk was postponed as there were so many puddles, muddy patches and long wet grass, yet, by postponing for one week, the route had dried out by so much it was hard to believe that only a week before that it had been flooded. Similarly, an Old Rifle Range Road walk, March 2022, was called off because of flooding, again it dried out within a week. A most interesting postponement was the Vernon State Forest April 2022 walk which, despite being on top of the Takura ridge, had flooded and had fast flowing streams 10cm or more deep. So again, it is we cancelled the Duckinwilla School walk April 2024, though a week later the road in was still cut by a flowing stream, and this was the case despite several days of the most glorious sunny Fraser Coast

Autumn weather. Taken together these examples illustrate the different effects and recoveries of flooding events.

These cancellations and postponements are instructive in that they give insights into water catchments, and permanent and ephemeral wetlands. In turn, these observations explain the different varieties of vegetation and forest growth occurring even over very short distances of a few metres from each other.

Over the past 10 years of the Branch's walks, we have mapped out 41 routes. On the surface most walks are in forest. With increasing familiarity walkers are seeing a lot more than repetitive similar forest, but are appreciating the many different ecosystems, the seasonal changes in forest undergrowth, tree canopy and the topographical differences leading to rapid flooding and rapid receding of flood water.

The experience of flooding events and the cumulative experience of walks all contribute to fulfilling the objectives of WPSQ in that walkers are learning so much about the Fraser Coast's natural environment.

Some 300 people have been recorded as having done the walks at some time. This is thanks to Carol Bussey and subsequent walks teams. Jenni, Vanessa and Peter developed a system of management for these walks such that now anyone can join the walks team, contributing and enjoying the fun of pre walk reconnoitres. Even on the day of the walks the registering of the walkers and the other minor imperatives are simple and easy.

The walks team does require someone to be a convenor, that is someone who keeps an eye on the dates and the diary of walks. The minimal paperwork has

been simplified to filling in a monthly invitation template; an activity all of us, in this modern world, are having to do. As a measure of the minimal demand upon a successor convenor, is the need to book a table at Arkarra for the one and only meeting of the year.

As the current walks team convenor I am convinced that “a change is as good as a holiday”. I want to pursue birding much more intensively and reduce what has been the hugely satisfying walking element of the Fraser Coast natural environment.

✿ *Frank Ekin*

*A selection of photos from the Winter BioBlitz.....*



**Photos clockwise from top left**  
 Hairy trumpet by rejen  
 White-cheeked Honeyeater by andreamvee  
 Australian Magpie by peter  
*Caladenia carnea* by aavankampen  
 Scarlet Honeyeater by dan-e  
 Dusky Moorhen by rubyrosenfield  
 Milkmaids by aavankampen

## FRASER COAST BACKYARD BIOBLITZ: WINTER 2024



Eastern Bush Orbweaver  
by scottwgvins

Scott was our most  
prolific observer  
this Bioblitz.



The weekend of 13-14 July proved to be a good one for the Branch's Winter 2024 Backyard Bioblitz, with generally favourable weather conditions, if a bit cool and windy. Sadly, I was barely able to participate this time as I was out of the region pretty much for the whole weekend.

**As of 18 July 2024, a total of 483 observations had been lodged on the iNaturalist website of 339 species, by 24 observers, with 79 people adding identifications to the observations.**

Scott Gavins spent a good part of the Saturday with me and the rest of our family over a long lunch at the Fairhill Native Nursery just north of Yandina, but it did not stop him from blitzing the field, with a record haul of 133 observations, of 96 species. Native plants have been his main interest over the years but he branched out some time ago and become a passionate photographer of pretty much any life form at any time of the day or night. He always manages to capture particularly appealing photos of Yellow-footed Antechinus (*Antechinus flavipes*). Tony van Kampen (botany focus) made 73 observations of 59 species. Andrea van Kampen (bird focus) made 49 observations of 35 species. Jen Stroh made 48

observations of 29 species. Michael Brown made 43 observations of 35 species, while Jenni Watts made 34 observations of 29 plant species.

**The most observed species for this Bioblitz were the lovely orchids, Pink Lady Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*),** with 9 observations, Brown Honeyeaters (*Lichmera indistincta*), with 5 observations, and four observations each of Eastern Grey Kangaroos (*Macropus giganteus*), and several plants (*Patersonia sericea*, *Goodenia mystrophylla* and the Spotted Gum tree, *Corymbia citriodora ssp variegata*). There were also observations of various fish, shellfish, stick insects, spiders, flies, crickets, butterflies, moths, beetles, bugs of various sorts and a good few weeds.

**You may browse the results of the Bioblitz at your leisure on the following website:** <https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fraser-coast-backyard-bioblitz-winter-2024>

There are a few photos reproduced in Wambaliman (previous page) and on our Facebook page.

As always, many thanks to those who participated and have posted their observations. \***Vanessa Elwell-Gavins**

## Colliery Circuit Walk - 5 May



“The giggle and chatter index” rose to new heights on the Colliery Circuit walk 5 May. The walk was threatened by weeks of incessant showers. But the wet weather showed the Colliery Circuit environment at its best and its most interesting. This clearly impressed the walkers.

The walks team is enthusiastic about this walk. The Circuit joins up the former Dunstan, Globe, and Churchill coal mine sites with sensitively maintained walking tracks mapped out by two local enthusiasts, Bob and Wayne. They have located remnant foundations of mine infrastructure and worked out their former purpose. Some of the tracks follow along the disused railway sidings.

The Colliery Circuit illustrates aspects of the industrial, economic and demographic histories of coal mining on the Fraser Coast. It complements the very successful Mary2Bay Rail Trail, so encouraging an appreciation of the Fraser Coast’s history and natural environment.

Australia, famously described as this “wide brown land” has been showing a

very different side of its weather with recent weeks of persistent showers. This is welcome for the restoration of wetlands, beneficial insects and birds, subterranean water tables and river health. The outstanding lesson of this monthly walk was the demonstration of a natural water catchment. This was the first occasion in several visits that we saw a water catchment working. On other visits we noticed small dried out rivulet beds, evidence of erosion and dried up wetland.

The walks team had prophesied wet feet towards the end of the 7.8km circuit. How optimistic the walks team were! To begin, the walkers used 4WDs to ford the first flood at the Susan River Bridge. Thereafter, most puddles could be walked around, but some early tracks were really puddles many metres long. Walkers negotiated expansive areas of shallow and gently flowing flooding water catchment which had been luxuriant grass ground cover just a few days before. Marlene showed her metal by plotting a way across the unexpectedly wide and fast flowing upper reaches of the Susan River.



In spite of decades of bush walking, this was the first graphic example of water collection on flattish ground leading on to a fast flowing stream. This phenomenon may seem self-evident, but to actually witness it was fascinating. Discussion centered around topsoil scouring, sediment accumulation and dissolved naturally occurring and human added chemicals with consequences down the enlarging Susan River to become a significant tributary of the Mary River, thus adding to sediment and chemical accumulation in the Great Sandy Strait.

*Wonderful, enchanting and magnificent* were the opinions of the walkers as they passed through areas of luxuriant grassland, natural wetland and forest. The Colliery Circuit is another Fraser Coast treasure.

✱ **Frank Ekin**



## Takura Trails Walk—Vernon State Forest—Saturday 1 June

After weeks of showers, a week of fine weather was more typical of Queensland with winter's blue skies, fabulous visibility and perfect temperature which dried out the Takura Trails for a perfect walk.



One may begrudge the past weeks of showers and dampness, but the natural environment of the Takura Hills thrived on it. Ground cover and grasses had thickened up, eucalyptus trees were blooming, so bird life was thriving. There was so much for the botanists that at one stage they fell a long way behind, but using their cunning bushman's skills they took short cuts to arrive at the splendid lookout before the main party.

The Takura Hills are the site of three of our walks each with very different environmental features. These walks should be seen as an introduction to this low range of hills with the attraction that the range is so close to Hervey Bay and Maryborough.



The tallest of the hills has several gullies. Surprisingly a previous walk was postponed because the top of this hill had flooded with running water.

Another of the walks is in the FCRC's Takura Environmental Reserve. This reserve has a wonderful graded rainforest walk.

The Takura Trails walk on Saturday 1 June is the third of these Takura Hills walks. In its first section, starting at the information board off Toogoom Cane Road, is dry sclerophyll forest. There are small valleys with shade and dampness leading to more lush vegetation encouraging rainforest species.

The open eucalypt forest enables a diverse understorey of native shrubs, grasses, and ground covers. The flowers of the Pastel Flower (aka Love Plant) and the native sarsaparilla, and the fruit of the creeping Winter Apple, delighted those acquainting themselves with the botanical landscape.

The walk led to the hill top and a steep escarpment facing Dundowran and Craignish. The view over the carpet of forest tree tops to the distant housing and beyond to the sea itself was the great reward of the walk. The tiny, brilliant red and black Mistletoebird, the vivid Scarlet Honeyeater and the Rufous Fantail visited walkers at this pleasant viewpoint recently, though did not appear on this occasion. However, during morning tea Varied Sittellas delighted us. The Ironbarks were in full flower attracting many nectar feeding birds and insects. The insects in turn attracted the insectivorous birds. One bird observer saw 24 bird species.

A highlight of this walk was the collage of bird photographs taken by John H. (see photo right.) Using the collage Peter tested our birding identification skills. All of these photos were taken in John and Val's 24-year-old garden on part of the Takura Hills. John and Val have nurtured a garden of native plants attracting this wide variety of bird species, as compared to those properties where the lawn mower and chainsaw are favoured.

It is a wonderful thing that these walks are so convenient and so environmentally rich. They must be appreciated and treasured.



John's bird photo collage

✿ **Frank Ekin**

## Fairlies Knob Walk—7 July

Two notable events were marked on 7th July 2024. By chance, this month's walk was the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inaugural walk on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 when WPSQ had its first botanising and birding walk at Fairlies Knob. It was probably Tony's knowledge of the region's maps that led WPSQ pathfinders, Jenni, Vanessa, Peter and Tony to plot and lead that first walk at Fairlies Knob. The second event celebrated was Marlene's coming of age and her approaching pension rights.



Fairlies Knob has a notable place in the history of the Fraser Coast Region. Max (photo left), who has an interest in historical investigation, described how, in 1862, the Glaswegian, James Fairlie arrived in Maryborough on the ship Helensee.

Fairlie's intention was to cultivate cotton for the family muslin mill in Glasgow. This was unsuccessful. Undaunted, he changed to sawmilling and built up a steam powered joinery shop producing sashes and doors. Max noted that such was the Fairlie skill and success that examples of his joinery work won him prizes of merit in the USA and France. James Fairlie's work is to be found in public buildings in Brisbane, and more conveniently, in the Maryborough City Hall.

James Fairlie acquired a vast tract of timber lands and took advantage of the prolific Red Cedar trees. James Fairlie's joinery and fret work were sought after throughout Eastern Australia. Max told us that by 1882, James, the son of the first James, began (native) pine plantations in the region. Walkers are grateful, for not only is there the Fairlies Knob walk, but also, there is the Clifton Creek Right Road walk, both renowned for Hoop Pine forest. Queensland at large has benefited as the Fairlies presented a large tract of forest to the public which, subsequently, became the third National Park in Queensland.

The birdwatchers, amongst the walkers, barely had to move from the car park such that within a very short time Eastern Whipbird, Spotted Pardalote and Yellow-tufted Honeyeater were spotted. Later the list was greatly enlarged. The jellybean prize of the day was awarded to Christine who spotted, very high up in an unusually spindly ironbark tree, two Tawny Frogmouths. Really this was such an obscure and exciting finding that she deserved two jellybeans.



The botanists too excelled. Jenni and Peter fielded questions and instructed on the use of iNaturalist for the three and a half hours of the anticipated 90-minute walk. Hardly surprising as 150 plant species have been recorded. Tony had spent the lengthy morning seeking and finding, amongst so many observations, the Wongi Fairy Bells orchid referring to its delicate little flowers. The more impressive Latin name is *Sarcochilus loganii* "Sarx", meaning thick, and "cheolis" meaning lips in Greek. This particular orchid species was first collected by a local expert, Alan Logan (a Branch member), hence the species name *loganii*.

This Fairlie's Knob outing was particularly rewarding as the three main foci of the walks were addressed: botanising, birding and history in this geological and environmental landmark in the Fraser Coast Region. \* **Frank Ekin**

## Koala tracking in Vernon Conservation Park

Friends of Parks Queensland and Friends of Vernon Conservation Park recently held an event in the Vernon Conservation Park. The event was funded by a State by Government Community Science Grant.

FoVCP focus on improving the management of the Park with QPWS by conducting walks and formal surveys to gain a better understanding of flora and fauna living in the Park.



The event offered an opportunity to share with our community what has been happening in the Park as well as provide funding for a Koala detection survey.

The gathering opened with Welcome to Country by Butchulla Elders. A botany walk was followed by meeting Austin the Koala detection dog and Cedar his handler from the University of the Sunshine Coast. We were later given a lovely demonstration of Austin's abilities.

Following this was a thermal drone demonstration giving an insight into the possibilities of locating Koalas and

other fauna from the air. We then shared a delicious meal together.

Unfortunately the wet weather dampened the planned spotlighting walk on this occasion although FoVCP runs spotlighting walks on a regular basis.

Many thanks to Friends of Parks Queensland who made an enormous effort to nourish us and pull together a wonderful informative afternoon despite the rain.

The results from the Koala detection survey will be in a future newsletter.

\* **Noel, Carol and Jane**

**Next walk—private property—TANDORA, SATURDAY 3rd AUGUST 2024**  
PURPOSE: To appreciate the integration of the natural environment and a cattle property run by the Titmarsh family. To search for koalas and bird spotting. BYO lunch at the homestead and admire and learn from the intriguing collection of artifacts: geological, anthropological, sylvan and transport.

## Our drinking water—April Library Talks

Annie Newbury is Fraser Coast Council's Water Recycling Technical Officer. Her job focuses on the Wide Bay water catchment and stor-



age zone, monitoring and measuring water quality for human consumption, as well as sewage water recycling for needs such as agriculture/park and garden irrigation.

age zone, monitoring and measuring water quality for human consumption, as well as sewage water recycling for needs such as agriculture/park and garden irrigation.

Annie presented a lively discussion at the Hervey Bay library on 19 April, illustrated with photos and graphs of the work she is involved with.

DOMESTIC water supply for most of the Fraser Coast is pumped from the Burrum River and Lenthalls Dam, Wongi State Forest and National Park being the primary catchment for these waters.

Lenthalls Dam was historically the first dam in Australia to use the crest gate system. Installed in 2007, the dam wall automatically raises and lowers with rainfall levels and catchment flow.

The water is pumped to a water treatment plant (Burgowan) where it is purified, removing heavy particles, chemicals and so on, and where chlorine is added. There is no fluoride addition. This water for human consumption is regularly monitored throughout the day for any fluctuations in water quality. The

SEWAGE water (approximately 90% of waste water) is treated to remove toxins for farming / irrigation systems. Again, this water is regularly monitored.

Unfortunately there is no quality control measure for environmental run-off that might affect wildlife, e.g. chytrid fungus microbes that severely affect native frogs.

Taking into account projected population increase in the Wide Bay area, water storage capacity is currently at 2.5 years supply without rainfall in that time.

In regards to the future water supply for human consumption, the water will have to be recycled to boost rainfall supply. Water recycling technology is less expensive compared with desalination of sea water for human consumption.

There was the inevitable reminder that we always need to be conservative, obey water use restrictions and regularly check household appliances for any leakages by reading your meter (before and after a period of no use).

✿ **Jackie Henrion**

## Birdwatching on the Fraser Coast —May Library Talks

The two Wildlife talks I gave back in May entitled **Fraser Coast Birdwatching** were well attended with over forty at each venue. The first was in the Creative Space in Hervey Bay Library and the second was in the former restaurant space in the Broga Theatre in Maryborough. This was a great venue, being a large space with glass windows overlooking the Mary River.



Scaly-breasted Lorikeets

I commenced each talk with a brief description of Fraser Coast ecology, explaining that the Fraser Coast encompasses both temperate and subtropical ecologies, giving rise to a selection of plants and birds from both.

I displayed images of forty birds that those present may or may not have seen. These included sample photos of small, medium and large birds, as well as the male and female of some of the species, a section on raptors and another on waterbirds. In addition I showed images of some of our favourite bird watching places. \***Ruby Rosenfield**

## Biodiversity—June Library Talks

A good crowd attended the first of two talks by Rob Loveday collectively titled “**Wildlife Resources and Preserving Biodiversity.**” Rob is a former school-teacher and long time teacher at U3A. He is about to begin teaching environmental science here at Hervey Bay U3A.

Rob is a polished and fast talker, and this talk was a bit of a précised biology lesson on the evolution of species since the beginning of life. He talked about geographical and sympatric speciation with respect to separation of the continents over time.

He talked about mutations, niches, habitats, adaptations, natural selection, survival of the fittest, convergent evolution and so on. He touched on classification.

Although Rob mostly talked about higher order animals his talk was to demonstrate how rich life is on our planet and offered a window into its biodiversity and the reasons why it is so diverse. Hopefully in Rob’s next talk, discussion around the importance of biodiversity will be broached. \***Ed.**

*Rob’s second talk did indeed stimulate some lively discussion amongst the 19 attendees. Read Jackie’s account p 19.*

## Wildlife Resources & Preserving Biodiversity - July Library Talks

*Diane (left) organises the speakers for each of the talks. Rob (centre) was our speaker for June and July. At right is John, our Branch president.*

Rob Loveday presented an interesting and comprehensive summary of the challenges facing preservation of biodiversity on Earth as essential niches are becoming more severely compromised by change largely wrought by human activity on the planet.

In the first half of his approach to this subject, he sketched the science of evolution and survival of the fittest through adaptation according to the thoroughly proven hypotheses of Charles Darwin. The evolution of long fingers of creatures such as the Aye Aye of Madagascar and the Triok of New Guinea provided typical examples.

This time, his library presentation focused on keystone species driving the evolution of whole ecosystems, forest plant species being the most prominent and vital, providing oxygen and other essential elements to all life.

Humans have evolved beyond the phase of keystone species as such to become a dominant force, particularly to the extent that humans have selected species for their own ends in the development of economics and medicine. Examples are use of plants for drugs but also animals for pharmaceutical testing.



Approximately 75% of the human population rely on plants and plant extracts for medicine and 100% rely on plant species and associated pollination for food.

Rob pointed out that it is important to maintain a diversity of wild plant species and their essential habitats to maintain a viable gene pool in order to develop new crop strains. Above all, of an estimated 250,000 plant species, humans have studied only 5,000!

In concluding, Rob discussed the use of animals in ecotourism as an example of animal diversity importance, emphasising that we must ask questions about ethical and moral management of other species used in driving an economy for a comfortable human lifestyle at the expense of certain levels of biodiversity and natural ecosystems. ❁

**Jackie Henrion**

## Nature Watch— *A sad goodbye and cheery welcome*



### *Pale-headed Rosella in garden*

Our garden took a turn for the worse when two Grey Butcherbirds moved in, the Silvereyes and the Double-barred Finches left, and then the Brown Honeyeaters (who had been regular residents for more than thirty years) also disappeared. Then Noisy Miners moved in for the first time. What a disaster!

On a much brighter note, in the last couple of days I noticed one of my favourite birds, a Pale-headed Rosella quietly foraging in our bottlebrush tree. I watched and took photos. Then I noticed there was another one!

They were so relaxed and were finding caterpillars to eat. After a few minutes guess who turned up but two Noisy Miners, who proceed to viciously dive-bomb the rosellas. They made three attempts at dive-bombing the rosellas. I was beside myself, but somehow the rosellas stood their ground, and the Noisy Miners eventually left. \***Ruby Rosenfield**

## Nature Watch— *Wildlife Whispers*

The bats have returned to the Botanic Gardens at Hervey Bay, a very large healthy looking colony with shiny red fur chests.

A large group of Eastern Grey kangaroos was seen grazing near the Bideford St. Torquay roundabout early one morning a few weeks back. A large mob of all ages with sparring males, right on the wooded margin of the new housing development. They might have spotted the ANARRA "Slow down. We live here too" sign posted on a tree in Colyton St! \***Jackie Henrion**

Whenever you are feeling sorry for yourself,  
consider this poem by DH Lawrence: "Self-Pity"

*I never saw a wild thing  
sorry for itself.  
A small bird will drop frozen dead from a bough  
without ever having felt sorry for itself.*

DH Lawrence whom we always associate with Lady Chatterley's Lover, The Fox, Sons and Lovers etc, wrote some beautiful wildlife poetry. I recommend "Kangaroo" and "Snake". \***Carol Bussey**



## Nature Watch—*The Bold the Bare and the Beautiful*



It was in 2021 when I noticed the most enormous caterpillar feeding on my Hawaiian Holly pot plant. I actually managed to take its photo and observed daily as my plant was increasingly depleted of its foliage.

It was only this year that I noticed the same species had arrived again to feast on the apparently delectable leaves of the same plant. This time I learnt that my visitor was the Hawk Moth caterpillar.

The shiny, burgundy foliage is slowly returning. On further inspection, I noticed the Hawaiian Holly develops a bunch of tiny pink flowers.

Who knows how long it will keep its beautiful foliage until another Hawk Moth caterpillar discovers it on my front verandah? \***Diane Christensen**

## *more on Nesting Boxes*



Recently, the Hervey Bay Woodcrafts Club Inc held an open day at their Torquay workshop and they have an impressive array of high quality nesting boxes for birds, some definitely luxury apartments at varying prices.

I have emailed a copy of the WPSQ's head office nesting box designs for various species of wildlife to them as they are interested in expanding their products. They will take orders and their next open /sales day is in November. (This is a different workshop to the Maryborough group whose nest boxes were featured in the previous Wambaliman edition.) \***Jackie Henrion**

**Contact details for Hervey Bay Woodcrafts are :**  
187 Bideford St, Torquay ; phone 0413344498  
email [herveybaywoodcrafts2@gmail.com](mailto:herveybaywoodcrafts2@gmail.com). Contact Russell.

## Nature Watch—*Plumbago Blue*

One exotic plant I like to have in my garden is the Plumbago Blue, *Plumbago auriculata*, hailing from South Africa. This plant thrives in our region - in fact so well it can get out of hand as the branches fall and take root easily - so I have it as a container specimen. It flowers profusely in sky blue, which is attractive, but for me it has earned a place in the garden because it is always surrounded by the small Plumbago Blue butterfly (aka the Zebra Blue). This native butterfly has adopted an exotic plant as its host plant, its caterpillars eating the buds and flowers.

The native host plant for the Plumbago Blue butterfly is the Native Plumbago, *Plumbago zeylanica*. This is a scrambling twiggy shrub of our drier rainforests. It is recorded in Mungomery Vineforest at Dundowran Beach, although I have not been able to find it. I have been unable to source this plant commercially – but I have grown one from a specimen from a Sunshine Coast garden. But it is slow growing and as yet does not attract the butterflies like my rampant exotic.

On a recent trip south I saw the exotic *Plumbago auriculata* growing in a number of places. It was thriving in the gardens at Gilgandra forming dense thickets and I saw it in Melbourne in people's gardens. And then I saw it in a box of newly acquired plants that my cousin had purchased to plant in her garden in the cool moist Dandenong Ranges of Victoria. A very adaptable plant indeed.

I saw the butterflies around the plumbagoes at Gilgandra. Field guides give the



*Plumbago auriculata*



*Plumbago zeylanica*



male



(underside both sexes)



female

range of the Native Plumbago as pan-tropical which coincides with the butterfly's range on the east coast, north QLD to about Sydney. But I then found an article that has tracked recent movements of the butterfly even as far as Adelaide. Apparently, the butterfly's range is extending because it has adapted to the exotic Plumbago planted in so many parks and gardens.

All this makes one ponder how much we can interfere with the natural flow of things. The butterfly has attendant ants - so what happens to them? Will the success of this butterfly species and its increased range affect its predators? In my lifetime I have seen the movement of Rainbow Lorikeets south and the proliferation of Noisy Miners as we provide big showy native grevilleas and the like to feed them, and this spread has impacted greatly on the smaller honeyeaters and hollow-seeking critters.

How can we possibly know the impact of planting a pretty exotic plant for our pleasure in our garden?

✿ *Jenni Watts*



## Marlene tackles the Larapinta Trail

My love for multi-day hikes has stretched out with an epic walk of the Larapinta Trail NT in May with Tracey Christoffel.



Marlene and Tracey and Mt Sonder

We chose to start way out at Redbank Gorge so our first achievement was climbing Mt Sonder, the fifth highest mountain in the NT. Our food drops were arranged so we only had to carry four days of food. With several night camps without access to water, we chose ultralight gear to reduce pack bulk and weight.

The common feature each day was rocks, millions of rocks. Our walk took us to days of blistering hot sun walking through near treeless kilometres to lush canyons and glorious wildflowers. The views from high points of Counts Point, Mt Giles lookout and Brinkley Bluff were worth the effort of struggling up these high peaks.

For such a dry area of Australia there are a lot of water courses. The rocks we climbed over were far bigger than us. Up and down with slow progress, surely around the bend it would be easier. Wrong.

We were making great progress along an easy-to-walk creek bed. Then the big rocks and stripping off our trousers to get through the waterway, following so many footprints, but where were the familiar blue arrows? Tracey checked her far out app. Far out alright! We

should have been on the top of that mountain range next to us. Tracey made the decision that we climb up vertically through the spinifex. At this stage I would have preferred climbing with a safety harness. Thanks Tracey, with her excellent navigation we made it to the top and back on track.

Melbourne bushwalking club left Hugh Gorge lunch shelter before us, heading to a difficult swim section in the gorge. When we arrived we could see the rock to swim around. While we fretted about how to keep our packs dry, an angel from that club came back and climbed on the rock, so we could pass our possessions to him, before we swam.

The last two days were the easiest. Cool, overcast weather. The final night we camped at a random location just 6km from the end. We planned to make an early start and enjoy a day of Alice Springs attractions. Plan foiled by heavy dew. This gives us an excuse to return to Alice Springs, and maybe redo Larapinta. I'm ready.

✿ *Marlene Luce*



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 a local rescue service.

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

**WILDLIFE RESCUE FRASER COAST** contact through Facebook page

**ANARRA** Phone 07 5343 4859

**WILDCARE** (operates from Pomona) Phone 5527 2444

For snakes **HERVEY BAY SNAKE CATCHERS** Phone 0476 226 747

**TURTLES IN TROUBLE FRASER COAST** Phone 0493 242 903

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

### Branch logo and shirt options

- *The original colour and design chosen was a “Bizcool” – all acrylic – Wasabi coloured polo (from Morgans)*
- *get the logo on any shirt at Morgans Sewing & Embroidery in Pialba.*

**Branch shirt for sale: brand new, size 14 \$20 Ph. 0418 884 917**