



The voice for an environmental network of SE Qld Community Organisations

Moreton Bay still under Pressure Effects of Flood still with us

TURTLES & DUGONG STILL IN TROUBLE?

In the last edition of the *Baycare News* we reported that following the January flood there was serious concern over the impact of the sediment plume on the seagrasses, turtles and dugongs in Moreton Bay. Scientists, for example, were well aware of the impacts in 1992 on dugong numbers in Hervey Bay due to flooding and the removal of seagrass by strong cyclonic waves. However, it was noted the Eastern Banks, where the majority of the seagrass and its associated turtles and dugong were, was largely out of the direct flood plume and it appeared from initial observations that dugongs that had been checked were in good condition. It was also noted in the Healthy Waterways newsletter No. 3 (www.healthywaterways.org) that more comprehensive checks were being made in June/July of this year.

We are now very concerned about reports from the media, organisations and individuals of large numbers of dead turtles and dugong being found, far more than people are used to. These observations are confirmed to some extent by the latest information from the Department of Environment and Resource Management on turtle and dugong stranding data for the period 1 January – 13 September 2011. In the Moreton Bay region 16 dugongs stranded compared to 13 for the whole of 2010. 183 turtles stranded compared to 203 for the whole of last year

(See: www.derm.gov.au/wildlife-ecostems/wildlife/caring.for.wildlife/marine-stranding-data)

The latest Healthy Waterways News (E-News) advised that a Forum of scientists had been held on 31 August to provide information and encourage discussion about the impacts on our river systems and Moreton Bay over the last six months.

Healthy Waterways Partnership 2011 REPORT CARD

Launch on Wednesday 19 October, 11.30 am
(See www.healthywaterways.org for venue details)

Report Card provides 'A' to 'F' health ratings for the Waterways of SE Queensland and Moreton Bay.

Locations:

CENTRAL: Riverlife Centre
(Formally the Naval Stores) located at the base of Kangaroo Point Cliffs, Brisbane
SOUTHERN: Logan City Council
Samuel and Angus Smith Park
Twilight Court off Waterford- Tambourine Road, Buccan, Logan
NORTHERN: Murrumba Downs Sewage Treatment Works, Lot 2 Bickle Road, Murrumba Downs

RSVP: Danielle Sharpe (07) 3177 9117
Email: hwrsvp@healthywaterways.org

IF YOU RE UNABLE TO ATTEND ONE OF THE LAUNCHES DETAILS OF THE REPORT CARD CAN BE SEEN ON HEALTHY WATERWAYS WEBSITE: www.healthywaterways.org

The topics looked at included:

- Immediate Impact to water quality in the Brisbane River and Moreton Bay
- A summary of data collected from a 20 week sampling and monitoring exercise in Moreton Bay
- Impacts on coral and seagrasses
- Possible long term impacts

It is hoped that some of the results of the forum will be posted on the Healthy Waterways website. Otherwise, we are told the deliberations of the forum "will inform content for the 2011 Report Card" (SEE Date for Launches of the 2011 Report Card on this page)

Success for Environmentally Friendly Moorings

At a recent Forum held at the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron HQ in Manly an overview of the recent trials of "environmentally friendly" moorings was given. Three types of mooring systems were installed in four areas of Moreton Bay; Tangalooma, One Mile (North Stradbroke Island), Point Halloran (near Victoria Point) and Dalpura Bay (Macleay Island).

Environmentally Friendly moorings have been designed to overcome the damage caused by conventional chain moorings that can produce "crop circles" in the sea grass beds as the vessel swings round and round. With an increasing demand for new moorings in areas with important seagrass beds something better was required.

The Forum was told by representatives of the Experimental Marine Ecology department of the University of Queensland that initial results showed that it was difficult to isolate changes to seagrass beds as being a direct result of the new mooring systems. However, a significant recovery of seagrass around the moorings was noted.

Where to from Here?

Owners of these "environmentally friendly" moorings attending the Forum outlined the situation from a user's point of view. There was a general acceptance of this type of mooring. However, the cost of these when compared to the existing chain moorings is a major deterrent especially when it is those owners that could not afford a marina berth that would be the ones needing a mooring. From the trial it became apparent that respective movements of craft around the new and old type of mooring system made it inappropriate to mix the two types in any area.

These observations lead to the observation that, as with many systems designed to be "environmentally friendly", there is a cost factor to be overcome. Some form of "subsidy" would need to be introduced. Also marine park authorities may have to only allow "environmentally friendly" mooring systems when designating new mooring areas with seagrass beds likely to be impacted on by chain moorings.

Watch out for Toads

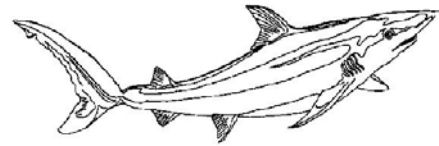
The latest newsletter from the Moreton Island Protection Committee (MIPC) reminds everyone about the need to protect Moreton Island from cane toads. Any toad seen must be caught so that it cannot breed on the Island. Earlier this year a toad had been found, possibly in building materials from the mainland. Rusty, the cane toad detecting dog had to be brought in.

New Redlands Office to Improve Environmental Status of Moreton Bay.

Baywatch was pleased to hear that an office has been set up in Cleveland which will house officers from three groups with an interest in the Moreton Bay environment. These three groups housed at 31 Middle Street Cleveland (Corner of Doig St.) are:

- **SEQ Catchments** - working on getting the local community involved in projects that will help deliver for the local environment.
Contact: Joel Bolzenius 0409 006 532
jbolzenius@seqcatchments.com.au
- **OceanWatch** - working on its "Tide to Table" project seeking improvements to fish habitat in Moreton Bay
Contact: Cheryl Bolzenius 0438 733 563
cherylb@wetlandcare.com.au
- **WetlandCare** Australia - working on its "Coastal 20" project seeking to rehabilitate and restore wetland areas.
Contact: Patrick Sachs 0488 087 772
patrick@oceanwatch.org.au

All of these programs are funded by the Australian Government's *Caring for our Country* initiative.



Shore Birds still in trouble

Recent editions of the Baycare News have highlighted the trouble many of our shore birds are in. Once again the news from the Queensland Wader Study Group is of continued major losses of habitat along the Asian flyways due to the reclamation of intertidal areas.

There is a need, therefore, to make every effort to protect these birds in our local areas. Migratory birds, especially, need to be protected from disturbance in their feeding places. However, all shorebirds need protection from disturbance and nest destruction in beach and dune areas where activities, such as four wheel driving, can have devastating results.

Pollution can also have impacts especially in dump areas such as that in the Logan City Council area recently mentioned in this newsletter. We are pleased, in this respect, to hear from the Pelican and Seabird Rescue group that efforts by local council officers have improved the situation with injured pelicans at the Berrinba Wetlands and the Eagleby Dump.

Baywatch

Our Local "Coast Watch"

Phone Mary (3396 1285) or email dobsoncj@hotmail.com with your concerns on issues that affect Moreton Bay – Our Marine Park!

Please help us take care of this wonderful asset right on the doorstep of our major city and at the front door for residents around the Bay,



Approval for Two Community Gardens in the Bayside Area

The community looks forward to the creation of two Bayside Community Gardens, at Bethania Street Lota and Wondall Road Uniting Church, Manly West which would never have been possible without community support. The creation of an organic garden will include fruit trees ideal for growing in local gardens, "Bush Tucker" patch, healthy herb and vegetable gardens. The organic gardens will include composting facilities and the use of rainwater from tanks which will support the healthy growth of the plants and trees.

A sensory garden and sand play area will be features in these environmentally friendly gardens. Existing trees of the parkland will also be incorporated in the design.

Both of these sites and their designs have now been approved by the Brisbane City Council Parks & Gardens Department.

Mr Hoffman of Lota recently spoke in the Wynnum Herald about the development of these gardens and the value of these for the community. He suggested that "those who care about growing food, gardening and getting together as a like-minded group achieve positive experiences. The gardens will be a valuable experience for our Lota community."

Riparian Habitat Improvement

Baywatch is pleased to hear that the Regional Landcare Facilitator, Apanie Wood, is hoping to improve the habitat management of river bank riparian zones. The recent summer flooding severely impacted shoreline stability and vegetation. There was also evidence that there was a lack of community awareness in regard to the importance of riparian vegetation in urban landscapes.

It is hoped that information hand outs and possibly information sessions for riverfront landholders can be undertaken.

Any improvement in this area of environmental management that may assist with the quality of water reaching Moreton Bay and our other marine areas will be very welcome.

Those who are interested in this project should contact Apanie ph. 0457106252

Email: awood@seqcatchments.com.au

Shore Bird Injuries

The Department of Environment and Resources Management (DERM) has now added shore birds to their injured wildlife list. The best current contact for injured wildlife is the Animal Rescue Hot Line 1300- ANIMAL or 1300 264 625

So the question you may ask is "what are these shore birds?"

These birds include: Hooded Plovers, Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers, Little Terns and Beach Stone-curlews. (All of these species are listed as now under threat in at least some parts of Australia).

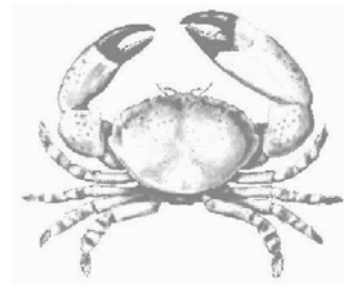
So, when you visit the beach

- be alert for nesting birds
- ensure your dog is on a leash
- make sure your dog never chases the bird life.
- take care if you are on the beach in a recreational vehicle
- dispose of your litter - best of all take it all away with you
- dispose of all fishing waste such as lines, hooks, weights, nets, etc.

NOTE: Bats are the Exception:

It is recommended that any injured bat should never be touched or picked up. Call the Bat Hotline for HELP to recover the animal.

Bat Hotline 0488 228 134



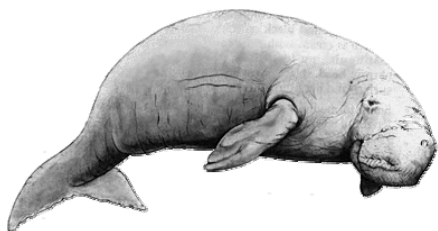
Changes for Fishers to Note. However, Business as Usual!

Baywatch has noted that the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol (QBFP) has been transferred from Fisheries Queensland to Maritime Safety Queensland in the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

We are told this will not affect the service with the QBFP continuing to enforce Queensland fishing rules on behalf of Fisheries Queensland. Also, contacts and offices will remain as before.

We hope that this change will prove beneficial to what is a very important service.

NOTE: Baywatch has been advised that the Brisbane City Council will now provide an "Emergency Wildlife Ambulance and referral service" to Wildlife Carers. The public can call on the well known phone number 07 3403-8888



Entanglement !!!! IMPACT ON WILDLIFE

Enclosed in some copies of the last issue of the *Baycare News* was a brochure produced by Pelican and Seabird Rescue entitled "*Litter makes a mess of our wildlife*". This brochure was produced using an environmental grant from the Brisbane City Council. It illustrates the practical response necessary in relation to the Information Sheet put out a while back by the Federal Government which reads as follows:

"Entanglement in marine debris can cause restricted mobility, starvation, infection, amputation, drowning and smothering.

Turtles, whales and seabirds may be severely injured and even die after entanglement with fishing lines, hooks, fragment of trawl netting or plastic packing straps. Seabirds caught up in marine debris may lose their ability to move quickly through the water, reducing their ability to catch prey and avoid predators; or may suffer constricted circulation, leading to asphyxiation and death. Fishing line debris, nets and ropes cut into the skin of whales or turtles, leading to infection or the slow and painful amputation of flippers, tails or flukes."

Source: *Harmful Marine Debris – Key Threatening Processes* - Information Sheet - Department of Environment and Heritage
www.environment.gov.au

Permits for Moreton Bay Marine Park

Baywatch has received a number of phone calls regarding an article in our local papers about the permit issued for an aquatic Jet Ski event last month at Redcliffe. A similar situation last year caused concern over the Redcliffe Offshore Superboat Grand Prix 2010 in regard to the possible negative effects on our marine wild life and waterways.

The general concern is that a permit has again been approved for high-speed aquatic activity in a marine park area. This is once again considered by many to be totally unacceptable and unsustainable

due to the likely impacts on the marine environment and its wildlife.

It appears that the Operational Policy for High Speed Vessel Events in Marine Parks is the key to this controversial topic. If you have further enquiries or concern about this policy of approving permits for high speed aquatic events then contact Qld Parks & Wild Service on 3131-2888.

"Spring is in the Air...or is it?"

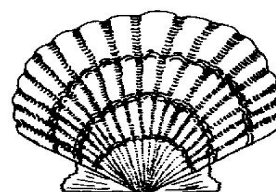
Baywatch notes that the annual Wynnum Spring Festival with Brisbane City Council funding was approved last week. This event had previously been refused any funding due to costs of the January floods. The decision by Council to now fund this public fun event is questionable when environmental grants and grants to volunteer wildlife carers appear to have been cancelled, reduced or cut.

These organisations are in a constant stressful state from chasing funding and sharing the council allocations from the limited available funds.

Rod Bloss stands down from BrisBOCA

Much of the improvement in the Logan area mentioned on page 2 has been as a result of work by the Brisbane Bird Observation and Conservation Group (BrisBOCA) led by its President, Rod Bloss. The Baycare News is therefore sorry to hear that Rod is standing down from the Board of BrisBOCA. Under Rod's guidance BrisBOCA has developed close ties with many government agencies, participated in surveys, revegetation and community education projects including the Eagleby and other wetlands.

We hope Rod is able to continue to enjoy his bird watching activities. We need more people like Rod to "make a difference"



Baycare News

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SEQ Healthy Waterways Partnership and
SEQ Water and Landcarers (SEQWaLC)**

For MBEA issues and "Baycare News" articles contact:
Co-chairs: John Dobson ph: 3262 3834, Mary Patchett
ph/fax: 3396 1285

If you wish to receive this newsletter via email please
advise John Dobson email: dobsoncj@hotmail.com or
Jennifer Singfield ph: 3869 0359.
Email: jennifer@sautec.com.au