



BIEPA NEWS

"Caring for our special habitat and its residents"

BIEPA PRESIDENT'S REPORT :

The "Bug Catcher" group led by expert Geoff Montieth will be carrying out a survey in the Bribie Island National Park on October the 9th. BIEPA members are welcome to participate. Also, if there is a student whom would like to participate in this area, Geoff can offer some interesting research opportunities. Contact me for further information.

There were only four committee members available for August committee meeting. This is one short of the required quorum therefore no official business was transacted. However the four of us who were available reviewed and progressed several ongoing activities during a productive couple of hours.

As reported at the last general meeting Vice President Linda and I meet with the Mayor Allan Sutherland, Councillor Gary Parsons and Council Executive Tony Martini late last month. This meeting moved the relationship between Council and BIEPA in a positive direction. The MBRC overdue Vegetation Management Plan was a priority item and we look forward to progress in this area.

Alan KERR (BIEPA President)



WALLUM FROG PROJECT:



This week representatives from WetlandCare, DERM, SEQ Catchments and BIEPA had a "wrap up" meeting to contribute to the final project report that WetlandCare, as the project sponsor, is required to make to the Federal Government. That same afternoon WetlandCare submitted another application

for Caring for Our Country - Community Action Grant funds for a project named "Bribie Community Monitoring of Priority Wildlife". Target wildlife includes dugongs, dolphins, turtles, wallum frogs and the water mouse.

The most public success of the Wallum Frog project was the nomination for the finals of the SEQ Healthy Waterways Awards. Other positive points are:

- The combination of partners worked (the proof being we are all going again with the new project).
- The water mouse was found again on the eastern side of the island.
- The frog monitoring methodology developed has put more rigour into Federal monitoring requirements (e.g. the Bore Fields).
- The SEQ Catchments water monitoring program will continue.
- The data collection, verification, storage and retrieval methods developed will be used for the new project.

Next Meeting:

27th September at 7pm

B.I. Library

Welsby Parade, Bongaree



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CALENDAR

Sept 7th

National Threatened Species Day

Sept 12th

National Bilby Day

Sept. 27th

General Meeting 7pm

- BIEPA and other volunteers contributed 1500 hours, representing 135% of our committed in kind labour.

And many thanks to the project corner posts, "our "scientists Ed, Harry and Ian and the band of professionals they attracted to help with the frog and mouse work. Some frog work will continue as Ed and Harry wish to publish their results at 2011 Royal Society of Queensland conference on Sand Islands.

The third mouse trapping event caught plenty of native rodents around Third Lagoon but no water mice. Special thanks again to Ian Gynther and his two helpers – I know they got very wet on the second trapping night.

SEQ Catchments are convening a meeting next week to review our monitoring sites with the intention of placing more focus on the south of the island.

Alan KERR (Project Manager)



LET'S GO DOWN TO THE BEACH:

A trip to the beach is an iconic pastime for most Australians. The sweetest childhood memories are of adventures to the seaside. Going to Bribie was one of these adventures.

Fifty years ago fishing and boating in the Pumicestone waters surrounded by dugongs and turtles feeding in the seagrass beds and swimming with playful dolphin families was a rite of passage. We roamed the mangrove flats and chased battalions of soldier crabs as they scurried and disappeared into their subterranean home in the sand. On Woorim Beach we found the tractor-like imprints of turtles and fruitlessly searched for their camouflaged nests. And at night the mopokes spooked us as we closed our eyes to dream new adventures.

No one could sleep beyond the early morning chorus of the birds signaling it was time to race to the beach to find the flossam and shells left by the night's high tide.

**A beach is a wondrous place to a child,
then and now.**

The dynamic, vibrant ecosystem of the beach has an interdependent and equally important relationship with the foreshore and the dune, mangrove and forest community. The foreshore, likewise, has an interdependent relationship with marine creatures and birds.

At high tide beaches are fish feeding grounds and the mosaic of life forms that live in the damp sands are not only food for other marine creatures, scientists have shown they form a structure that binds and stabilizes beach sand preventing serious erosion.

The animals that live in the sand are essential foods for the marine animals and all the migratory waders and birds that visit our beaches.

Bribie Island's eastern foreshore remained virtually pristine until recently when uncontrolled and increased access attracted four-wheel-drive vehicles.

Now this pristine beach has become a daily raceway for hundreds of 4WD, four wheeler and trail bike vehicles. No longer can families feel safe and free to enjoy long hikes and kayaking picnics. Nor is there protection for the nests of the endangered loggerhead turtles that have frequented these coastal dunes for centuries.



Council's around Australia are proactively addressing these detrimental and sterilizing effects on our natural coastal assets and are planning to keep vehicles off beaches in their shires; this will save the costs of repairing damage done to beaches and dunes caused by vehicles including human interference with the natural dynamics of our coastlines.

The Moreton Bay Regional Council and the State Government's Queensland Parks and Wildlife Department could follow the lead from other Shires and States in protecting the habitat of our endangered migratory species not to mention the renewed enjoyment of ordinary families who have a right to play and revel in a natural environment, safely.

Diane OXFENFORD



MAURITANIA PLANTS TREES TO HOLD BACK DESERT:

Mauritania has launched a tree-planting program aimed at protecting its capital from the advancing desert and coastal erosion, a project that could eventually extend thousands of kilometers across Africa.

President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz on Saturday planted the first of some 2 million trees that are meant to form a "green belt" around the capital, Nouakchott, and curb erosion elsewhere in the desert nation that straddles black and Arab Africa.

"The aim of this green belt is to stop the advancing desert and stop encroachment by the sea, which is threatening the town with floods," Ba Housseynou Hammadi, minister for the environment and sustainable development, said.

"This belt will also play an economic role. Some of the trees that have been chosen can be used for firewood. Others will produce gum acacia, which is (a natural gum) sought after for pharmaceutical products," Hammadi added.

It will take four years to plant the trees in Mauritania.

The project is part of a broader anti-desertification plan, the "Great Green Wall," launched by the African Union in 2005 to try to create a 15 km-wide wall of greenery stretching 7,000 km between Africa's east and west coasts.

The plan is to plant a number of desert-resistant species of tree across 11 nations in Africa's Sahel region, to the south of the Sahara, to ease erosion and improve the quality of the soil for farmers in a region prone to drought and food shortages.
planetark.org

NATIONAL THREATENED SPECIES DAY:

National Threatened Species Day (NTSD) is held on **7 September** each year - commemorating the death of the last Tasmanian tiger at Hobart Zoo in 1936.

Australia's landscapes and species have been severely impacted by over 200 years of habitat loss and fragmentation.

The impacts of land development, introduced plants and animals, grazing, salinity, changed fire regimes, pollution, and a changing climate all place additional pressure on our threatened species and their shrinking habitats.

Species conservation lies at the heart of all WWF's work throughout Australia. Twenty per cent of Australia's animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction. Climate change, ongoing habitat destruction caused by land clearing, and the enormous risk posed by invasive weeds and feral animals, mean our native plants and animals face a bleak future if action is not taken now.

WWF is addressing these major threats to species survival in Australia through broad-ranging campaigns and programs. They work directly with governments to ensure improved policy on species conservation, and our on-ground turtle conservation and shorebirds programs provide a coordinated, national approach to reversing population decline throughout Australia.

WWF-Australia is part of the WWF International Network, the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisation. It has close to five million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

Their mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:

- **conserving the world's biological diversity;**
- **ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable; and**
- **promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.**

If you would like more information on WWF log on to their website:

www.wwf.org.au

WALLUM WILDFLOWER WALK:

87 wildflower enthusiasts from the Gold Coast to the Sunshine Coast and west to Ipswich attended our walk on August 15th in absolutely glorious weather. After the cold, wet weather we have had recently a lot of the flowers are slow to bloom this year but what was out put on a great show.



The purple Patersonia were in abundance as well as the Vanilla Lilies (Sowerbaea). Yellow Aotus and Goodenia put on a lovely show along with white Pimelea and Wedding Bush (Ricinocarpos).



Our thanks go to the 'wallum experts' who helped with the locating and identifying of the different plant and to Diane Oxenford for organising the morning.

BRIBIE ISLAND VETERINARY CLINIC
Veterinary Surgeon & Physician

Dr Craig KOHLER B. V. Sc.
& Associates

Benabrow Ave., Bellara
Ph. 07 3408 6011
Honorary veterinarian to BIEPA Inc.



Peter SAMSON's bird walks

07 3410 7804
everyone welcome-

morning tea provided



NO BIRDS IN THE BUSH:

Australia's woodland birds, including many species generally regarded as common and widespread, are declining at an alarming rate according to Birds Australia. This is a result of historic and current habitat losses, making Australia's woodlands among the most threatened and degraded habitats on the continent.

These striking results are highlighted in the report entitled: 'State of Australia's Birds 2009'. The report is aimed at informing Australians of the status of their birds, and to help bring about improved understanding and better management of the land for birds and other wildlife.

The State of Australia's Birds highlights a different theme each year. The 2009 report focuses on revegetation for woodland birds, particularly those in agricultural landscapes. Australia's woodlands - especially in the temperate south-eastern and south-western wheat and sheep belts - are among the most extensively cleared, fragmented and severely degraded habitats on the continent.

Historic losses of woodland vegetation communities have been severe. For example:

- In the 18 million hectare Western Australian wheat belt, only 10% of the native vegetation cover remains; and in many places, the cover is as low as 3%.
- Clearing of remnant vegetation for agriculture accounted for 96% of clearing in Queensland during 2003-2004.
- Around half of Victoria's native vegetation has been cleared since settlement, including 80% of the original cover on private land, and the figures are higher for the flatter agricultural regions.



Bird populations in Australia's agricultural regions are consequently suffering serious declines.

Species such as Bush Thick-knee *Burhinus grallarius*, Barking Owl *Ninox connivens*, Endangered Swift Parrot *Lathamus discolor*, Endangered Regent Honeyeater *Xanthomyza phrygia*, Grey-crowned Babbler *Pomatostomus temporalis*, Hooded Robin *Melanodryas cucullata* are becoming increasingly isolated to small, degraded remnants of sub-optimal habitats.

In response to the plight of woodland birds, there has been an increasing urgency of calls for revegetation in south-eastern and south-western Australia. The new report introduces the conservation responses Birds Australia, and their partner organisations, are undertaking to tackle the threats - both at the regional and local levels.

Birds Australia have also launched a new campaign 'Reconnect (with) the Bush' - recognising that large-scale loss of connectivity is one of the main drivers of the decline in bird diversity. The new campaign highlights the importance of retaining and maintaining intact native vegetation, repairing degraded habitats, replacing habitat that has been removed, and reconnecting natural habitats to recreate a fully-functioning landscape for wildlife.

"Disengagement with Nature is arguably the most serious threat to our environment. What we don't know about, we don't care about. We urgently need to Reconnect with the Bush"

www.birdsaustralia.com.au

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Disclaimer: Content & opinions in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor

All contributions to be sent to Editor before 5th of the month

This newsletter can also be downloaded from the web site: www.biepa.org