

# MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

## MCCG NEWSLETTER Winter 2025



**ABOVE LEFT:** Kids' Day At The Cottage magic. For more from Tracey Read turn to page 6.



**RIGHT:** John Crowley displaying his app at the MCCG Nursery. For more, and another photo from Tracey Read, turn to page 3.



**MCCG Spring  
Newsletter  
Deadline for  
ALL NEWS & PHOTOS  
30 August 2025.**

**LEFT:** Echidna talk and Citizen Science updates. For more turn to pages 5 and 6.

**RIGHT:** Brushtail possum mother and joey, captured in the innovative Comfy Creatures' nest box. For more about this exciting live-streaming innovation, turn to Wesley Nielsen's page 8 article.



**Your latest issue:** Brookie Show (p6), Calling Backyard Naturalists (p6), Chairperson's Report (p2), Echidna Talk (p5), Froggin' Around (p4), Kids' Day at the Cottage Report (p6), Moggill Magic (p8), 'Photo Comp' (p3 & 7), Platypus Research News (p5), Seeds & Weeds (p4-5), Snake Walk (p4), Volunteer Opportunities (p3)

## Chairperson's Report

Winter is here... or has it been? While we shivered through Brisbane's coldest morning in 20 years, forecasts now suggest a warmer winter ahead. Whatever the weather, MCCG continues to thrive, thanks to the tireless efforts of our volunteers and supporters.

National Volunteer Week was celebrated in May – a timely reminder that MCCG is a volunteer-powered organisation. Our Members are the heart and hands of everything we do. Through Bushcare, education at our events and in the community, growing and caring for thousands of plants in the nursery, running the committee, writing funding grants, maintaining the website/social media and newsletter, organising and running several much-loved and fabulous community events, participating in scientific research, and engaging the next generation of environment carers.

**ALL** your efforts are deeply appreciated.

Our presence at the May Brookfield Show was another great success, providing an opportunity to connect with the community and share our work, as well as promoting our upcoming events. On 8<sup>th</sup> June, our annual *Kids' Day at The Cottage* brought in around 175 attendees, with children and families enjoying a range of fun and educational activities. Events like these are vital in engaging children in seeing the natural wonders in our local environment.

We were also pleased to host another well-attended public talk at the Kenmore Library, this time on echidnas, which drew an enthusiastic group of 33 people. These talks continue to be popular, offering fascinating insights into the wildlife that shares our catchment and are a great way to meet and connect with other Members. Make sure to read more about all these events featured throughout this newsletter, and remember that all [upcoming events](#) are listed on our website, including our next Quarterly Talk on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (speaker tbc).

A heartfelt THANK YOU goes to Suzy Philp for her valued contribution as Membership Secretary for the past few years; Suzy's efforts have been very much appreciated. The Membership Secretary role has now been incorporated into that of the Secretary. Big thank you to Zoe for adding this to her current duties.

Bushcare work continues throughout winter in all our sections. New volunteers are especially welcome. Each pair of hands really does make a huge difference, so, if you have always *meant* to go, now is the perfect time to get involved. Stay warm and stay connected,

*Tracey Read*

## Editorial

Thank you to everyone who has sent through news, photographs and ideas for this latest Moggill Creek Catchment Group (MCCG) Newsletter. I really enjoy reading every item, and hearing all about what is happening in and around our catchment.

As always, it would be WONDERFUL to have more news and stories from our volunteers, readers, researchers, citizen scientists, and young environmentalists. I can promise you that if you send me something for the next Newsletter, I will do my very best to include it.

**Just email YOUR news *direct* to  
[mccgeditor@outlook.com.au](mailto:mccgeditor@outlook.com.au)**

**The absolute deadline for the next issue is 30<sup>th</sup> August 2025.** Start now! Don't wait until the deadline to [email me](#). You never know... you might just find *your* photograph on the front cover!

*Cathi*

Moggill Creek Catchment Group (MCCG) is a volunteer action group, aiming to conserve & improve the natural environment of our catchment on both private & public land.

**Chairperson: Tracey Read**

**Secretary: Zoe Bishop-Kinlyside**

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**Articles of interest to Members are *always* welcome.**

The Editor reserves the right not to publish any item submitted. Material will be edited for clarity, style, and space. The decision of the Editor is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. ***Please email YOUR news *direct* to [mccgeditor@outlook.com.au](mailto:mccgeditor@outlook.com.au).***

**Newsletter Editor:**

***Dr Catherine A. Lawrence OAM (Cathi)***

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## Volunteer Power

A BIG thanks to Oliver (and his mum) who volunteered at *Kids' Day At The Cottage* and made cups of tea for all the stallholders and other volunteers.



Oliver's help was very much appreciated by everyone after the early morning's work setting up and before the rush of all the excited children and families. *See you next year, we hope, Oliver.*

Tracey Read

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Can YOU lend a hand this winter?** There are several projects where your fellow MCCG volunteers can really do with a few extra helpers, including:

- **A Working Bee at The Cottage** to remove unwanted and broken things. Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> July: Two hours, with lunch included. Contact Gordon via email: [g.grigg@uq.edu.au](mailto:g.grigg@uq.edu.au).
- **Mulching the Sawmill Forest Walk Track**. Date to be confirmed — planned as two hours, with refreshments included. Contact Gordon via email: [g.grigg@uq.edu.au](mailto:g.grigg@uq.edu.au).
- **Platypus Survey Event Coordinator needed** ASAP: [Event](#) scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> September. Please contact our [Secretary or Chair](#).
- **Platypus Survey Event Volunteers** for the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary big celebration breakfast. Event Date: 14<sup>th</sup> September (until the Coordinator is appointed, please contact our [Secretary or Chair](#)).

**We hope to hear from you soon. Many thanks.**

Tracey Read

## John Crowley's Brilliant Nursery App

John Crowley, a long-time MCCG volunteer, has dedicated countless hours over the years to developing and refining a suite of outstanding apps that are used to catalogue and maintain up-to-date records of all the plants in our MCCG Nursery. These invaluable tools make it easy for fellow volunteers, and Members, to access detailed information about the hundreds of plant species we grow. The apps not only provide plant descriptions but also pinpoint their locations on the racks and in

the aisles — making it much easier to find particular tubestock amongst the thousands.

John's work is a perfect example of how technology and volunteer passion can come together to support our work. The apps complement our existing books, printed resources, and work of our extremely knowledgeable Nursery volunteers, to create a comprehensive system that enhances both education and efficiency at the nursery. It is especially useful on busy mornings.



**Picture:** The Nursery team at work (image above, and front cover photo of John credit Tracey Read).

Next time you visit the Nursery, be sure to ask about the apps — or, better still, chat with John himself. John's knowledge and innovation continue to make a lasting impact within our group and community.

Tracey Read

## MCCG Photography Competition

There are still a few months left to work on your entries for the 2025 Photography Competition. Entries for the **open** categories can be submitted on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October at the Brookfield Showgrounds.

Photos entered into Digital Young Persons category (prep to grade 6) can be submitted via email between 3<sup>rd</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> October — and don't forget there is **no charge**

for entries into the Digital Younger Persons (YP) category.... **Yes, it's FREE ENTRY for this YP category!** Check out our [website](http://www.moggillcreek.org) from late August for entry forms and terms and conditions.



Rebecca Bain

## Watch Where You Walk!

Earlier in the year, during the unusual conditions related to Tropical Cyclone Alfred, Sandy and I were out walking the dog one evening and spotted this snake in the torchlight (*see Rosemary's photo, below*).



It was tiny—smaller than a pencil in width, and about 20cm in length. Although there were no obvious signs of road trauma, it was deceased on the asphalt.

It appears to be a Southern Dwarf Crowned Snake, (*Cacophis krefftii*), which is nocturnal and

primarily identified by the collar around its neck. These snakes feed on skinks and are found in moist sheltered areas, including gardens, rainforests, and eucalypt forests. The night we were walking had been wet, so this may have been why it was on the move. As they are weakly venomous, we left it well alone. Carrying a torch and watching where you are walking is always recommended. You never know what you might find!

Rosemary Pollock

## Froggin' Around: Winter

First, a quick snapshot of local *Froggin'* calls: Frogs calling from the dam were *Litoria peronii*, *Mixophyes fasciolatus*, *Litoria fallax*, *Limnodynastes peronii* and *Adelotus brevis*; calling in surrounding areas were *Litoria gracilentia*, *Litoria caerulea* and the Slender Bleating Tree Frog (*Litoria balatus*).

And now... for more general *Froggin'* observations... Recently I saw Council Officers checking for mosquitos in a local park. The pools also contained both cane toad and frog tadpoles. On enquiry, I was told that the tadpoles would eat mosquito larvae. I was never sure about this, and investigated further. Apparently, the evidence is not very conclusive. Tadpoles are initially vegetarians but, as they develop, they can become carnivorous. In a 2016 *Australian Museum* article, Rowley notes that several Asian frog species are voracious predators of mosquito eggs, and confirms that mosquito larvae are consumed by a diverse array of frog and toad tadpoles from around the world. Tadpoles may also compete with mosquito larvae so much that they reduce mosquito larval survival. This competition seems to be largely over food, but may also be via chemical warfare, with

tadpoles possibly producing chemicals to slow the growth of mosquito larvae. Tadpoles of one of the most common frog species in Australia, the Striped Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes peronii*), appear to be doing battle with mosquito larvae in this way—which means that mosquitos may actively avoid laying eggs in water with tadpoles as amphibian larvae are bad news for their offspring.

I was also fascinated to read a *Wildlife Australia* article (Summer 2023) that describes the frogs of Aotearoa, New Zealand, as 'an ancient and primitive family that no longer exists anywhere else in the world' ([Peters, Wildlife Australia, vol 60.4](#)). There are seven frog species in New Zealand, four of which are native and belong to the genus *Leiopelma* (three NZ frog species are introduced from Australia). *Leiopelma* species catch insects by gulping (that is, there is no tongue flicking), are totally silent (no croaking), do not live in ponds (living in damp moist shady places in forests), and produce very large yolky eggs laid under rocks or vegetation. The lifespan of NZ native frogs can be as long as 30 years. A fascinating read!

For more about New Zealand native frogs, and to see some great images, visit [NZFrogs.org](#). Happy froggin'

Phil Bird

## Seeds: Beauty 'in Spades'

The Spade Flower, *Afrohybanthus stellarioides*, is an annual herb that can be seasonally common in grassy woodlands and open forests in our catchment, such as within the upper slopes of the Gap Creek or Mount



Coot-tha areas. Characterised by erect, sparsely hairy stems and linear to ovate leaves, the plant produces solitary, orange or yellow flowers with a distinctive, spade-like lower petal (*see photo, left, credit A.B. Pollock*). Thus, its moniker.

Spade Flower is commonly seen in late spring, but can be found in early winter, after unseasonal rains. The bright, delicate flowers contrast strongly within the clumps of grasses they grow within-- unfolding early and lasting only a day.

Sandy Pollock

## Weeds: Tobacco Bush

Tobacco bush (*Solanum mauritianum*) is a distinctive, large weed—common on the margins of vine forests, tall eucalyptus forests, old abandoned pasture lands, or even some urban gardens. Locally, it has grown swiftly, thanks to our 6 months of rain and moisture.

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For more, visit our website ([www.moggillcreek.org](http://www.moggillcreek.org)) or Facebook page (@MoggillCreek).



The large soft, broad and hairy olive-green leaves form a bush suggesting a disused canvas tent. The purple flowers fade, producing greenish and then yellowish globular fruits (see Sandy's photos, below).



While a non-native plant, this species is thought by some revegetation practitioners to provide protection for establishing rainforest plants, and the fruits are popular with some frugivorous birds. Others may well want to remove this plant, where ringbarking of larger plants, or carefully removing seedlings are effective in control. Hairs displaced from the large soft leaves can cause irritation to some people, so use care and protective gloves and clothing if removing by hand.

*Sandy Pollock*

## Building an Echidna Baseline

MCCG's second evening talk of the year, '*Building A Baseline: Echidna Conservation Through Community Engagement*,' was a great success. The event drew an enthusiastic crowd, all eager to learn more about one of Australia's most iconic yet elusive mammals—the short-beaked echidna (see Tracey's photo, below).



Dr Kate Dutton-Regester, a Brisbane-based wildlife ecologist and lecturer, delivered a fascinating and informative presentation. Kate shared insights into echidna biology, behaviour, and habitat—highlighting how community-powered science is helping uncover where these animals live, what they need to thrive, and also how much we still don't know about these mysterious egg-laying mammals. Kate's passion for conservation was contagious, sparking lively

discussion and so many thoughtful questions from the audience.

It was exciting to hear how everyday citizens can play a key role in building a regional baseline for echidna conservation, right here in South East Queensland (for more information turn to Dr Kate's article, on page 6 of this Newsletter). A big thank you to our marvellous presenter, and to everyone who attended and helped make the evening such a vibrant and engaging event!

*Tracey Read*

## Urban Waterway Platypus Research

**Wesley DeMuth shared exciting news about the Wacol research that found a platypus originally tagged in Moggill Creek. Read on for more from the Brisbane City Council (BCC) news report.**

Brisbane City Council's Natural Environment, Water and Sustainability Branch (NEWS) engaged researchers from the National Platypus Conservation Initiative, led by Dr. Gilad Bino (UNSW Sydney) and Dr. Tamielle Brunt (Wildlife Queensland), to undertake a week-long survey of Bullockhead Creek—an important urban waterway winding through industrial, commercial, and residential areas.



Image, above, of the May 2025 Bullockhead Creek, Wacol, platypus-research, shared by Wesley De Muth, BCC.

Excitingly, two male platypuses were captured during the study. One was a juvenile recently emerged from its burrow in Wacol Bushlands, confirming that breeding continues in this population. Even more remarkable was the second capture—an older male previously tagged by Dr. Brunt in Moggill Creek in 2020. This individual had travelled over 20km, crossing the Brisbane River, providing the first confirmed evidence of connectivity between Wacol and Moggill Creek platypus populations.

This discovery is vital for understanding the resilience of urban platypus populations. Health and genetic samples collected will provide further information to

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support long-term conservation planning. While Council has been collecting Environmental DNA for platypus, this study marks the beginning of trapping monitoring efforts to further understand and support Brisbane's iconic platypuses.

*Amanda Brigdon, BCC*

## Kids' Day Nature, Fun, and Learning

Our annual *Kids' Day at The Cottage* took place on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June, and once again proved to be a much-loved event for local families. The Cottage grounds were buzzing with activity as children and parents alike enjoyed a wide array of hands-on experiences designed to connect young minds with the wonders of the natural world. Under the comfort of marquees, children explored native bees, butterflies, beetles, and stick insects—creatures of all shapes and sizes that sparked curiosity and wonder. Water bugs from Moggill Creek were examined closely using magnifying glasses, offering a fascinating glimpse into creek life (see Tracey's front cover photo).



There was plenty of fun and learning to be had, from identifying animal scat through to crafting unique jewellery with native seeds and beads. The ever-popular wildlife show drew enthusiastic crowds, with loads of excited reactions as each new bird or animal made its appearance (pictured, above, image courtesy Tracey Read).

Families were also invited to pot their own native seedlings from MCCG's nursery to take home. It is an eco-friendly souvenir that supports local biodiversity. And, of course, no *Kids' Day* would be complete without the delicious sausage sizzle.

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers, presenters, and families who helped make this free family fun day such a huge success. We look forward to welcoming you again next year!

If you are keen to help, we need a lot of hands to set up and run this fabulous event, and to pack down afterwards. Please get in touch to be part of 2026 *Kids' Day at The Cottage*.

*Tracey Read*

## Brookie Show

MCCG once again had a successful stall at the Brookfield Show, held from 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> May. This year, we showcased our brand-new, custom-designed double-space marquee, complete with eye-catching banners featuring children from past *Kids' Day at The Cottage* events, as well as stunning photos from past MCCG Photo Competitions (see photo, below). The display also included information about the benefits of MCCG membership.



The marquee provided a fantastic backdrop to promote both *Kids' Day* and the Photo Competition, whilst also offering free plants as an incentive for new members to join MCCG. We are *very* happy to welcome the **11** new members who joined at the Show! A huge thank you to Dale Borgelt for designing our crowd-attracting marquee and organising our participation in the Show, *and* to the 16 volunteers who generously gave their time to support the MCCG stall. In each two-hour shift volunteers gave out our awesome event flyers (thanks, Janine, for designing them!), connected with the community, and enjoyed free entry to the Show! It's a fantastic event to be involved in. Interested in joining us next year? We'd love to hear from you.

*Tracey Read*

## Calling All Backyard Naturalists

**Help us to uncover the secret lives of Echidnas.**

Have you ever noticed mysterious conical or oval-shaped diggings in your backyard? You might be hosting one of Australia's most iconic and elusive foragers, the echidna or bandicoot.

As part of an ongoing research project at The University of Queensland (UQ), I'm working with students and citizen scientists to better understand the behaviour, habitat use, and threats facing these species in South East Queensland. Our goal is to create a photographic library of their diggings, which can help landholders, field naturalists, and conservation groups identify their presence even when the animals remain out of sight.



To support this work, we're inviting local residents to take part by: **reporting** regular sightings of echidnas or bandicoots; **sharing** locations where characteristic diggings have been seen; and **volunteering** to host a camera trap, which we can provide, to help confirm the diggers' identity and collect valuable data.

This work is especially relevant in areas like the Moggill Creek Catchment, where remnant bushland and backyard corridors provide valuable habitat for these ground-dwelling species.

In parallel with our digging research, we're launching a new project, funded with \$45,000 in grant support, investigating the potential interactions between invasive fire ants and native wildlife. Fire ants are known to impact ground-foraging animals overseas, and this project will be one of the first to examine those impacts in an Australian context. Further, we will explore if echidnas are consuming these pests. Using spatial analysis, and camera trap monitoring, we aim to compare animal activity in areas with and without fire ants, in order to detect patterns that may indicate avoidance, displacement, or changes in behaviour.

For this research, we're currently seeking sites known or suspected to have fire ants, *and* control sites where fire ants are not present, ideally within similar habitat types. If you manage land, or know of sites in the region that may suit this case-control approach, your input would be invaluable.

Another vital piece of the puzzle is understanding where echidnas are living, and where they're dying. We strongly encourage anyone who sees an echidna, alive or deceased, to report the sighting to [Wildlife Queensland's Echidna Watch program](#) or [iNaturalist](#). These reports help map population hotspots and identify roadkill blackspots across South East Queensland, essential data for planning and conservation. Please do make a report if you see something; even deceased animals provide crucial information about movement patterns, risks, and abundance. Whether you're a regular wildlife watcher, a curious gardener, or simply enjoy spotting tracks in the dirt, your observations can make a difference. Camera traps are also available for participants to help confirm sightings and gather behavioural data.

To participate, or suggest a site, please contact me: [k.duttonregister@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.duttonregister@uq.edu.au)

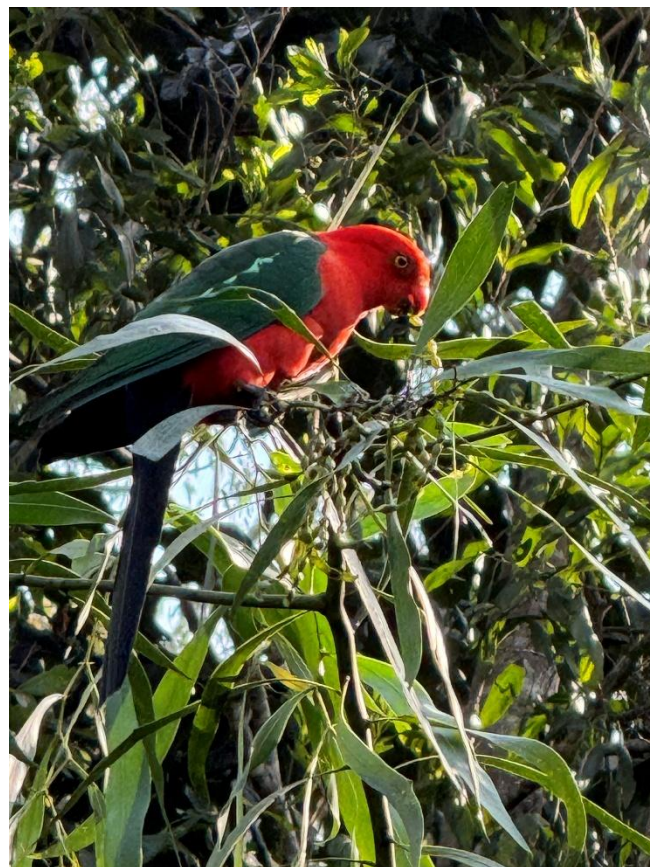
Let's work together to better understand and protect these incredible native species right here in our own backyards.

**Dr Kate Dutton-Register**  
**The University of Queensland/Wildlife Queensland**

## Looking Forward to the MCCG Photo Comp Display

See page 3 for a reminder of the key dates for **submitting** your entries for the 2025 MCCG Photography Competition ('photo comp').

I'm really looking forward to seeing all of the entries when displayed at Kenmore Village (Mon 20<sup>th</sup> to Sat 25<sup>th</sup> October). And to congratulating the winners at the Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October Prize ceremony... *and* to featuring many of the images in future issues of this Newsletter.



Thanks to Chris Bruton for sending through this great photo of an Australian king parrot feeding on wattle seeds (*above*). The photograph was taken at the end of 2024, at a time when Chris noted that these birds were frequent visitors. I hope this inspires YOU to get out into our catchment to take some photographs for your entry into our fantastic MCCG 'Photo Comp.'

*Cathí Lawrence*

### e-newsletter?

Just email the **MCCG Secretary** with 'email newsletter' in the subject line and include your name and address in the message. *Thank you.*

## Moggill Magic: Nature Walks with Live-streaming Nest Boxes

**We have a talented designer in our midst. Read on for more from Wesley Nielsen about the *Comfy Creatures* MCCG project, and join us all in the countdown to when we can go on nature walks that include innovative live-streaming nest boxes.**

Earlier this year MCCG team members applied for grants to deliver nature walks that will feature nestboxes that have monitoring stations that support live video streaming!

It is a rare and thrilling experience to see Australia's arboreal fauna as so many of them are nocturnal and, of course, usually hidden away in their all too few natural hollows. Consequently, most of these native animals such as our native gliders or nightjars are unfamiliar to most members of the community. Even if the names of these animals are familiar, it is very unlikely people have had a wild encounter. But this may soon change. Through these latest projects, the MCCG will encourage all members of the community to discover native wildlife, contribute to our public scientific databases, and deliver practical conservation outcomes through the associated artificial nest hollows.

MCCG has applied for four grants, with proposed sites around Rafting Ground Reserve, Huntington Bikeway, Brookfield Showgrounds, and the Gold Creek Reservoir. Three of the applications are yet to be announced, but we already have \$2,000 awarded to the project ... *fingers crossed*. Each of the proposed projects is for between six and sixty nest boxes and camera systems, and our aim is for the first project to be installed over the coming months.

The design and specific mounting location of the nesting boxes is proposed to best complement the prior environmental management of individual sites (see left, photograph of the Karalee proof of concept device). Final details are yet to be determined, but we hope to monitor and baseline the populations of animals where revegetation and



weed management activities now provide food and shelter. Our aim is for the nest boxes to bridge some of the 80+ year gap before these new trees develop their own natural hollows to support the reproduction of so many species.

The monitoring stations are standalone, solar-powered devices which stream live video and other sensor data to the recipient's smartphone (this works over a self-hosted Wi-Fi network). This means that observers can walk along a path to each nestbox and view the inhabitants—with opportunities to capture videos and photos and download a data file. Everyone can become a citizen scientist, contributing completely unobtrusive and continuous data to public databases. This is different to previous nestbox monitoring, which is generally carried out sporadically using cameras on poles. One proof-of-concept device in Brookfield streamed footage of a nesting pale-headed rosella (December), an owlet-nightjar (January), and a glider nest (February). With this new technology we can see the true contribution of these hollows to the environment which could not have been identified through previous systems.



Picture, above: Australian owlet-nightjar (*Aegotheles cristatus*), captured on the proof-of-concept device at Gold Creek Rd, Brookfield.

The stations log data on ambient light, external temperature, internal temperature at the level of the inhabitant, pressure, humidity, and air quality. It is hoped that all this data will help us understand how to scientifically develop systems and tools, like artificial hollows, to best support our endangered species. The monitoring stations are world-first technology and the MCCG has partnered with the local start-up business [Comfy Creatures](http://comfycreatures.com.au) to deliver these projects as pilot sites, in order to finalise the development of these innovative concepts. Stay tuned to MCCG announcements as to when you can go and connect to the first of our nature walks with these nest box monitoring stations. If you would like to know more about these projects, or the monitoring stations I have designed, you can contact me at [wesley@comfycreatures.com.au](mailto:wesley@comfycreatures.com.au)

**Wesley Nielsen, Designer**