

Annual Report of the Moggill Creek Catchment Group

2013 to 2014

Supporting Moggill Creek Catchment Group

I would like to thank the Management Committee and Section Leaders for their efforts throughout the year, namely Malcolm Frost, Adrian Webb, Cathie Mortimer, Dale Borgelt, Joanna Yesberg, Michael Humphreys, Graeme Wilson, Gordon Grigg, Andrew Wilson, Deb Ford, Bryan Hacker, Letitia Norton, Damien Egan, Richard Woodhead, Judy Petroeshevsky, Kate McVicar, John Crowley, Jim Pope and our Creek Catchment Officer, Amanda Maggs.

Our Organisation succeeds because many people share the load of keeping the organization running effectively and providing services to our members and the catchment community. Not in any particular order I want to thank:

- A. The many volunteers at the Bushcare working bees.
- B. Our able Nursery crew under the guidance of Graeme and Andrew Wilson: Helen Palmer, Debbie Allen, Tom Asher, Dawn Beck, Maria de Jong, Gabby Bell, Ian Hancock, Richard Tumman, Marjorie Welch, Adrienne Forrestal, Maxine Binning, Sally Stinton, Joyce Westenberg, Jan Grigg, Bryan Hacker, Joan Miller, Margaret Palmer, Alison Hoole, John Crowley, Bruce Siemon, Damien Egan, Margaret Basso, Dale Borgelt.
- C. The Cottage gardeners, Deb Ford, Cathie and Adrian Mortimer and Warren Hoey.
- D. Newsletter editor, Graeme Wilson; formatter, Margaret Hastie; printing, John Gower; labelling, packaging and posting, Dale Borgelt; MCCG envelope printing, Bryan Hacker.
- E. Adrian Webb, Tim Howell, Camille Percival and Leo Lee who work so hard to keep the Creek Health Monitoring Program going along with a bunch of hardy volunteers.
- F. Cath Cleary from Habitat Brisbane, the LFW team of Cody Hochen and Catherine Madden, and Louise Orr from SEQCatchments.
- G. Geoff Lawrence, Judy Ward, Deb Ford, Malcolm Frost and Adrian Mortimer in particular for managing the development of our new website.
- H. Councillor Margaret de Wit, Dr Bruce Flegg MP and Mrs Jane Prentice MP for their strong support throughout the year.
- I. Geoff Lawrence and his committee consisting of Robyn Frost, Margaret Whyte, Jocelyn Henry, Cathi Lawrence, Dale Borgelt and Bruce Siemon who once again

ran a brilliant photography Competition in 2014. Andrew Wilson vetted the photo entries for accuracy of titles and correctness of category.

J. Bruce Siemon who works so hard behind the scenes collating and presenting all manner of data on our activities. Our thanks to David Gooding for creating the Section map and the map on plant distribution from our Nursery.

K. Jim Butler and Ian Muirhead for managing the bird project. Ed Frazer, Julia Sarna, Jason Wimmer, Nic McCaffrey, Cam Kilgour, and the late Helen Ovens who also contributed significantly to this worthy project.

L. Chris Hosking for running the 2014 platypus survey ably assisted by Richard Woodhead, Gaynor Johnson and Dot Dalglish.

M. Gordon Grigg for regularly mowing the cottage grounds.

N. Adrian Mortimer and Bevan Borgelt for regularly and selflessly assisting in all manner of tasks when needed.

MCCG Membership

Year	Members
1998	178
1999	217
2000	210
2001	170
2002	192
2003	217
2004	330
2005	343
2006	349
2007	375
2008	393
2009	456
2010	457
2011	440
2012	505
2013	504
2014	530

Communication and Education

TALKS AT THE COTTAGE on the third Thursday of the month continued to interest and entertain as they wonderfully widened our knowledge of our catchment and its biodiversity.

2013

July & August More To See In The Bush with Andrew Wilson

September Bryan Hacker spoke on Controlling WEEDS in our catchment

October Janet Spillman talked about Heroes and Villains of Mount Coot-tha

November Conservation Volunteers Australia talk by Regional Manager,
Libby Gardiner

2014

February Plant ID with Jan Blok co-author of Fragments of Green

March Curator of Brookfield District Museum, Joy Stacy

April Fungi with Jutta Godwin

May Beetles with Geoff Monteith

June Cats Claw with Louise Orr



KIDS' DAY AT THE COTTAGE on the last Sunday in May continues to be a wonderful success with plenty of environment themed activities and displays to attract children with their parents and carers. In 2014 300 attendees happily enjoyed all the event's offerings and activities in perfect weather. They are always especially delighted when everything is FREE - which we are able to do because of the enormous input from volunteer presenters and helpers, and the much appreciated funding help from the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund via the Pullenvale Ward and Cr Margaret de Wit.

As always, Martin Fingland's wildlife presentation was a highlight and the ultimate scene stealer was his young wombat.



BROOKFIELD HALL PRESENTATIONS

AGM November 2013 in Brookfield Hall

Guest Speaker, Janet Spillman, informed and thoroughly entertained us with the historical background of Brisbane's First Forest Park – Mount Coot-tha.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS highlight MCCG aims and activities. Two are of special note. Our MCCG stand at the Brookfield Show, and the wonderful exposure we get from the Annual Photo Competition display in Kenmore Village.

BROOKFIELD SHOW STAND

We had a successful presence with help from our cheerful and informative volunteers. Many people admired the fine examples of vine weeds cultivated by Bryan Hacker, and peered into the cages of prospective biological control insects for Cats Claw and Madeira Vine. Our 'good' native plants for sale gave us the opportunity to point out one of the big advantages of being a member – free locally grown native plants from our volunteer-run Nursery.



ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

This year's competition attracted a strong field of local photographers. It was most pleasing to see plenty of interest from our local schools with some very high quality shots on display. The organizing committee led by Geoff Lawrence once again did an excellent job in organizing this flagship event.

The Novices category was won by Kenmore State School with "Wildlife in our Backyard". Congratulations to all of the participants.



NEWSLETTER

Our thanks go to Graeme Wilson (Editor), Margaret Hastie (Formatter), John Gower (Printing), Dale Borgelt (Labelling, packaging and posting) and Bryan Hacker (MCCG envelope printing).

MCCG WEBSITE

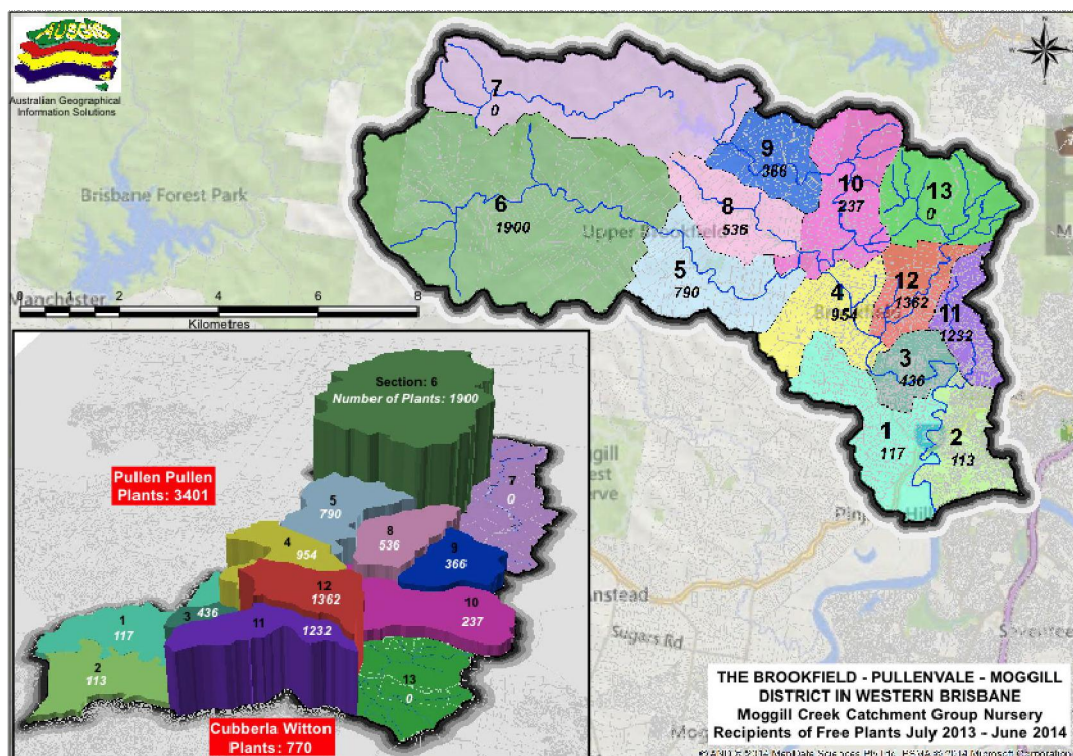
In my last report I forecast our having the new website up and running by early 2014. This was not to be. The sub-committee led by Geoff Lawrence aided by Malcolm Frost, Deb Ford, Judy Ward and Adrian Mortimer did a very professional job in working with Kingfisher Creative to deliver the new site by August 2014. The new site is a great improvement on the old one and the compliments are flowing in.

MCCG Nursery

Under the able leadership of Andrew and Graeme Wilson, the nursery distributed 12,012 plants, covering 169 species.

Volunteers at the nursery contributed 1,086 hours, working on the first and third Mondays of each month during the year. This estimate does not include the many additional hours provided by Graeme and Andrew.

One hundred and thirty seven (137) different seed species were collected by 30 members.



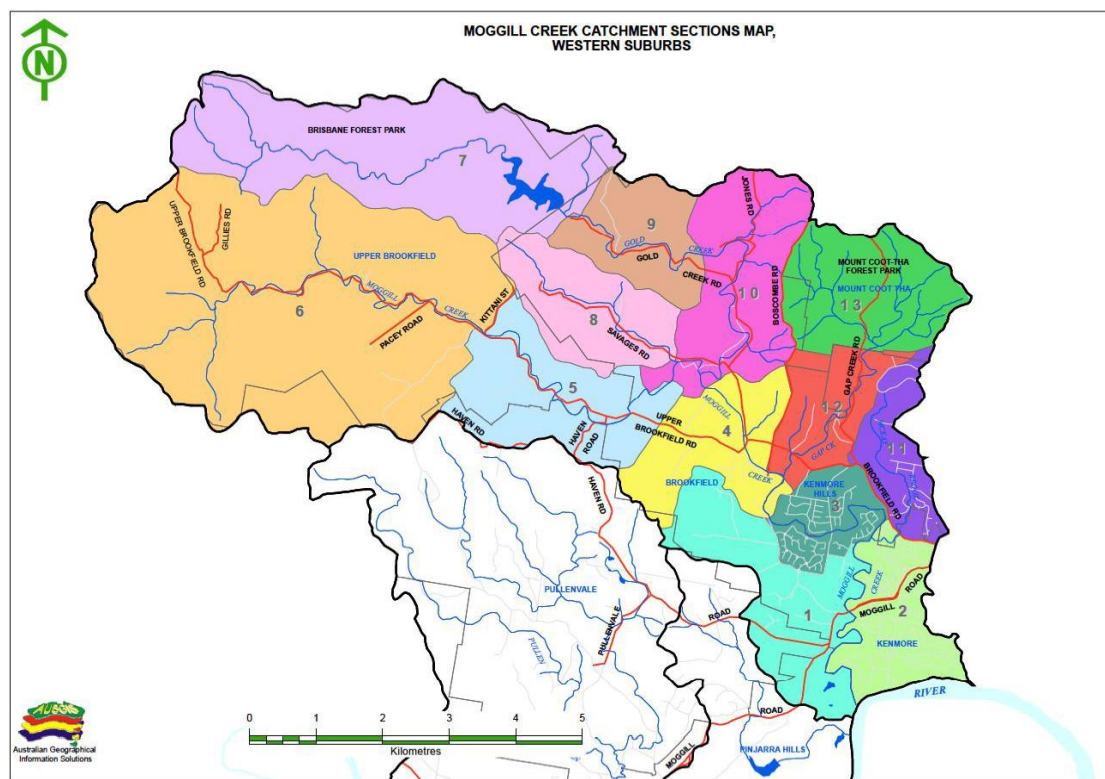
Map courtesy of David Gooding

Landcare Activities

As MCCG Landcare Adviser Bryan Hacker is quite frequently invited to member's properties to discuss revegetation projects and identify native and exotic plants. With this encouragement members visited often collect plants from the Nursery and embark on a continuing process of habitat restoration. In the past year Bryan has visited 15 properties on the owners' request to provide information and advice.

Working on Public Land

Another year has past so quickly for our hard working volunteers. The value of this work, as I intimated last year, often goes unnoticed in a world with little time to stop and reflect on what is around us. We can help you get your hands dirty and productive in your own back yard and feel good about it!



Map courtesy of David Gooding

Section data

Section	WB	Volunteers	Hours	Xtra hours	Plants
2	12	6.1	214	17	645
3	10	13.1	314	123	1469
4	7	5.6	89	272	290
6	0	0	0	81	0
Pacey Rd	16	9.6	407	93	1125
8	3	5.3	40	22	33
9	9	6.7	120	25	40
11	23	7.7	470	37	45
11 (KSHS)	1	90	360	114	1010
12	13	6.0	176	139	1166
Total	94		2190	923	5823

Thanks to Bruce Siemon for preparing these data.

Section 1 No Section Leader

Section 2 Lower Moggill (Judy Petroschevsky)



This small group of volunteers, some whose homes border on the creek, have worked hard this year. The area is in a flood plain, in which a small creek becomes a raging torrent of water during heavy rain, causing massive erosion on the creek banks, and, as in 2011, severe flooding of the whole area. They have worked on a strategy, where the erosion has been severe, to plant out the higher banks with vegetation which will lessen the strength of the water flow, hold the soil, and hopefully limit erosion. They are starting to see the completion of some of our planning, just waiting for the next downpour!!!!!! They have had excellent assistance from Habitat Brisbane to achieve our aims, and Judy would like to thank Cath Cleary for her support of our group. They are looking forward to our Christmas Party, which is always great fun with our rather varied group.

Section 3 Huntington/Tuckett (Jim Pope; Malcolm Frost)

Note: This report covers the period from January 2014 (when Jim Pope took over leadership of the section from Malcolm Frost) to September 2014. Malcolm had previously led the section for 15 years from 1998. For information relating to 2013 and earlier, please contact Malcolm. The Group is responsible for looking after the riparian corridor along both banks of a 1.6 km section of Moggill Creek, between Tuckett Street Park and Rafting Ground Road (see attached map). It currently has approximately 26 active volunteers.

During the year to date they held 8 working bees. These were held on the last Sunday of each month (except December), between 8.30 - 11.30 am. (No working bee was held in January this year, due to the changeover of section leader). Main activities of the working bees include weed clearing, (especially weed vines such as glycine, Madeira vine, cats claw, asparagus fern and balloon vine), planting of trees and shrubs, brush cutting, clearing of exotic grasses, mulching and watering of new plantings. Main activities this year have included:

1. Planting of trees, mid-story shrubs ground cover plants and lomandras to widen the riparian corridor in zones E and F (see pictures and attached map).
2. Weed clearing, maintenance of recent plantings and in-fill planting on the upper and lower banks of the creek in zone A.
3. Weed clearing, removal of exotic vines and brush cutting of exotic grasses in zones A, B, G, E and F.



Working Bee - Zone E (31st August 2014)



New Plantings - Zone F (June 2014)



Balloon Vine - Zone A (June 2014)

Overall, approximately 260 person-hours of work were carried out at working bees, and a further 50-60 hours of field-work between working bees. (For the year from July 2013 to June 2014, it is estimated that the corresponding figures total well over 400 person-hours). During the year the group planted approximately 500 native trees, shrubs and ground cover plants.

As section leader, in March Jim prepared an Annual Plan for Habitat Brisbane (see attached). In April he attended a 2-day First Aid training session run by St. John's Ambulance (which was financed by Habitat Brisbane). He also attended a plant identification workshop organised by Habitat Brisbane and a Habitat Brisbane and Wildlife Conservation Orientation Day in June.

In July Jim submitted an application for funding (\$23,305) from the Community Conservation Assistance (CCA) Program, to carry out habitat restoration and flood mitigation work that is beyond the capabilities of our volunteers (see attached application and map). Their section of Moggill Creek is subject to regular flooding, which in the past has led to significant erosion and damage to tree plantings - see pictures below, taken on 28th March 2014. Further pictures of the impact of a more severe flood in February 2013 are included as an appendix to this report. The outcome of this funding application is expected to be known in late 2014.



Tuckett Park - Zone K (28th March 2014)



Tuckett Park - Zone A (28th March 2014)



Bridge in Creekside Park - Zone D/E (28th March 2014)



Bridge in Creekside Park - Zone G/H (28th March 2014)

On Sunday 21st September the group held a function in Creekside Park to recognise and celebrate the enormous contribution of Malcolm and Robyn Frost in leading our bush care group for 15 years to February this year. The function was attended by approximately 30 people, including past and present members of the bush care group and representatives from Habitat Brisbane. At the function, Councillor Margaret de Wit (Pullenvale Ward) unveiled a plaque on one of the park benches, in recognition of Malcolm and Robyn's achievements (see pictures below). A report of the event was featured in the October edition of the 'Local Bulletin' (p35).



Plaque on Bench in Creekside Park

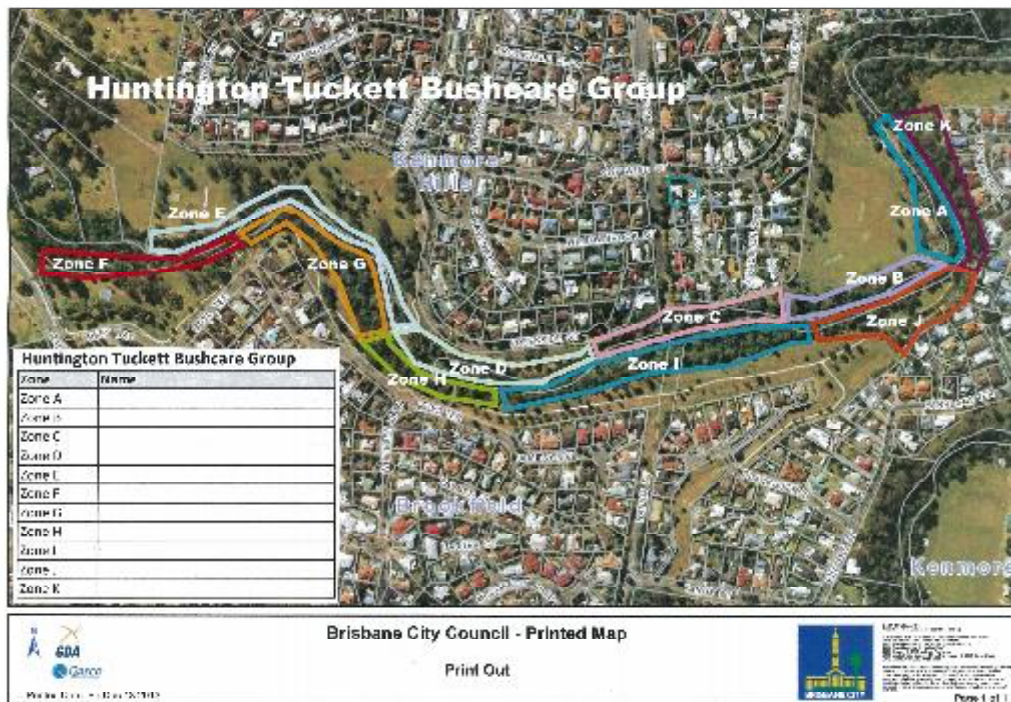


Councillor Margaret de Wit (Pullenvale Ward) with Malcolm and Robyn (21st Sept. 2014)



Attendees at the function for Malcolm and Robyn Frost on 21st Sept. 2014

Malcolm and Jim have managed the leadership transition smoothly, and Jim is grateful to Malcolm Frost for his ongoing support and to all members of the bush care group for their continued commitment. Special thanks to John Brew for helping to organise the function for Malcolm and Robyn, which was a great success, to Joanne Yesberg for providing refreshments at the working bees and to Cath Cleary of Habitat Brisbane for her continued support and assistance.



Section 4 Showgrounds (Damien Egan)

The Showground Bush care group started in 1998 and is responsible for working on Brisbane City Council land from the culvert at Boscombe road along Rafting Ground Road to the Brookfield Road roundabout.

Rafting Ground Road Site: Total Hours 150 Plants 75

Starting at the Brookfield roundabout, Bryan and Jenny Hacker are continuing to do weed management on this site controlling Embu panic in particular. Excellent natural regeneration is occurring, with river she-oak seedlings protected three years ago now up to 4m tall and several other species also regenerating successfully. This is why with the new bollards in place and mulch around the big figs the area is looking wonderful and is a beautiful natural back drop to the Brookfield Showgrounds opposite!!

Weed management continues behind the Produce store and in the Bush Tucker Garden with monthly working bees maintaining already cleared areas.





Boscombe Road Area: Total Hours 20 Plants 75

A further 30 x10 metre area has been cleared and planted with 30 long stem plants by BCC contractors and planning is underway for another 60 long stem plants to be planted 2015/ 2016 . Our group has already added another 40 plants from MCCG with infill plantings at this site.

Brookfield State School Site: Total Hours Nil Plants Nil

Kenmore State High School: Total Hours 325 Plants 1000

Continued search and rescue weed maintenance and watering (Butterfly plants) of established areas for Student Stream Savers Stage 3 & 4 projects. Funding for which will run out by the end of this year

NTD planting with years 10/11 students established 1000 plants within McKay Brook section of the school Tennis courts with 60 students participating.

Toyota is our major sponsor providing funds for the plants / Hats / T shirts for the students and Lee Kernaghan as guest celebrity for the day planted a Blue Gum tree in memory of the children that lost their lives in the Malaysian air disaster.

Section 6 Upper Brookfield (Kate McVicar)

This section of Council land is along Moggill Creek and is located approximately 800m beyond the Upper Brookfield State School. It has an area of 1680m².

The site is surrounded by large acreage properties, and many of these landowners are engaged in their own revegetation projects, which means that attendance at public working bees is low. Also, this area is flood prone and has suffered extensive damage and loss of plants over the years. Despite these setbacks the revegetation efforts continue.

Highlights for the year

- Habitat Brisbane (HB) have given the site a boost by providing much assistance and support – in particular contractors have assisted with brush cutting and spraying the weed infestations which took over after the last floods.
- HB brought in a Consultant Hydrologist to inspect the site and to provide advice on future methodologies and planting. This advice has been extremely useful and forms the basis of future work to be undertaken.
- An application for a CCA grant (\$18,000) was made for assistance to address many of the issues raised by the Hydrologist. The application was a joint submission between Habitat Brisbane and Land For Wildlife, as the site is adjacent to private land. This application has just been approved.
- Dept of Roads and Drainage undertook major work on the site to mitigate future flood damage to Moggill Road and the bridge. This resulted in a large area along the creek bank being cleared of elephant grass. The bank was then reinforced with rocks, soil and jute mesh. Contractors have planted the area (appr 300 plants) and provide ongoing support such as watering.

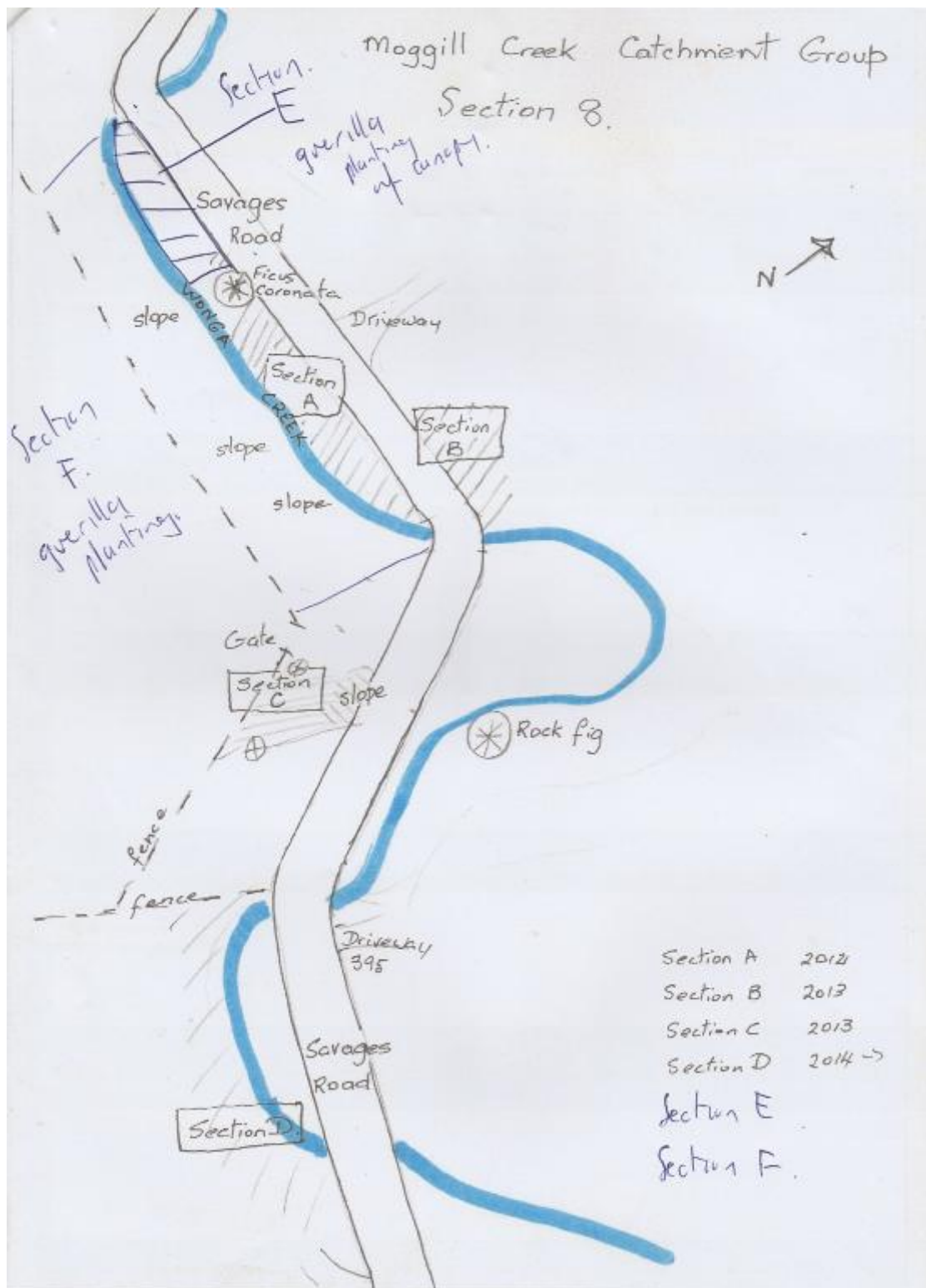
Future Plans for the site

- Introduce erosion control measures such as coir logs to stabilize the degraded areas.
- Participate in the deep root planting trial with 10 canopy trees in the most vulnerable areas.
- Continued maintenance and infill planting



Section 8 Wonga Creek (John Crowley)

This year section 8 has progressed in its restoration and establishment of riparian areas around Wonga Creek and Savages Road. Enthusiastic and regular volunteers including Richard Tumman, Dave and Gough, Gordon Wilkinson, Tony Pettitt, Peter McFarlane, Tim Spencer, Andrew and Graeme Wilson, Joyce Westernberg, John and Jenny Larkin, have carried on the work done in 2013 assisted by Habitat Brisbane and an NRMA Grant. A mud map of the work areas is given below:



Section A has become well established. On the left shows clearing and planting in 2011, on the right is 18 months growth to July, 2014.



The creek bank has been reinforced by Habitat Brisbane with jute logs around which lomandra and lower story plants have been planted to hold the bank in time of flood. The creek has been desilted by the council, and jute meshing laid down over mulch to hold the bank in section C in August, 2014.



Section C
BEFORE



Section C
AFTER
May'14

Section D has been established with mid story and canopy
ern side will be mulched and planted after rain.



Thanks to the NRMA for the community grants project of \$3,880 this year, Habitat Brisbane and MCCG for their continued support, and to the volunteers, without whom this work would not be possible.

Section 9 Upper Gold Creek (Gordon Grigg and Des Scherman)

The Upper Gold Creek group has been meeting for 10 months a year since 1998. The average attendance is about eight people. The group enjoys support from BCC's Habitat Brisbane programme. At working bees, members have removed smothering vines and other weeds from the public land, i.e. the road reserve and creek crossings, and planted numerous native trees wherever space (and power lines) permitted. The past year, however, has seen a broadening in scope to focus on Cats Claw infestations on private land. About half their meetings this year were directed at Cats Claw control, in tune with the MCCG's catchment-wide push, the rest were engaged in maintenance work on the public land. Gold Creek Road and its creek crossings look very different now from how it all looked in 1998. There is no sea of lantana, no trees are struggling under smothering vines, and there are hundreds of additional native trees and shrubs. The challenge for the group is to recruit more participants. Most of the Gold Creek valley is in private hands. An ideal situation would be for property owners to be working collaboratively, tackling the major weed infestations in the valley as a community effort.

Section 11 McKay Brook (Bryan Hacker)



Section 11 includes two Habitat Brisbane Bushcare Groups, McKay Brook and Mirbelia Street, which have recently been combined by BCC. The area covered is about 900 m along McKay Brook, which has been progressively revegetated over the last 15 years. Most of this area is now forested with a continuous canopy around 10 m high. Many of the trees are now seeding and natural regeneration is occurring which is carefully encouraged through control of herbaceous weeds. A group of 7-10 enthusiasts meets twice each month, the current focus being on weed control, especially along margins, where Madeira vine and glycine are particularly invasive. The herbaceous weeds Singapore daisy, creeping inch plant and Mexican petunia are a continuing threat. Some infill planting has been carried out downstream from Brookfield Road, associated with flood damage in 1911.

Section 12 Gap Creek (Michael Humphreys)



An inspection by a hydrologist arranged by Habitat Brisbane provided a lot of ideas for preventing erosion along Gap creek. As a result of this inspection we have increased the density of planting along the creek bank. We are also placing rock filled bags into the creek at a few key locations so that we can plant downstream of the bags. By doing this we hope to stop the erosion of the creek bank where this is threatening the trail through the park. We have also planted the large area that was cleared on private and public land on the Deerhurst Road side of the creek. Habitat Brisbane cut down a few trees for us on the Deerhurst Road side of the park just upstream from the bridge over the creek on Brookfield Road. This area has now been planted. Most of our creekside plantings occurred during the winter months when there was less of a chance of a flood washing away the new plantings. We have been able to water these plantings by using the taps in the park. This has kept these new plantings alive in the recent dry spell.



MCCG Projects

1 Pacey Rd project (Warren Hoey)

In March 2014 the Pacey Rd group successfully completed a 12 month project funded under the Queensland Government's Everyone's Environment Grant Scheme. They reported the following achievements:

- Significant riparian restoration along Pacey Rd.
- Almost 800 volunteer hours were recorded across 21 working bees. In addition it is estimated that an extra 150 hours was contributed outside of the working bees.
- Removed a significant burden of weeds viz. madiera vine, glycine, asparagus vine, singapore daisy, lantana, by hand weeding (120m³) and contractor spraying.

Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that

Moggill Creek Catchment Group Inc.

has successfully completed

Pacey Road Sub-Catchment Conservation project

under the Queensland Government's *Everyone's Environment grants* program
administered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.



Nick Weinert
A/Director



- Attracted strong interest from non-member Pacey Rd residents with the result that the group will expand.
- Excellent involvement with the Upper Brookfield State School at the bottom of the sub catchment. Weeded and replanted areas within and adjacent to the School grounds. School children now have responsibility for maintaining the plants.
- Pacey Rd group will continue its environmental works in the sub catchment with the support of the Moggill Creek Catchment Group.

They have resumed monthly working bees following this very hectic program and continue to contribute positively to the overall health of the Moggill Creek Catchment. Our thanks go to Brian Krieger in particular for his hard work in scheduling the working bees.

2 Creek Health Monitoring Project (Adrian Webb)

The creek health monitoring program commenced in early 2011 and since then has involved twice yearly monitoring at 12 sites across the catchment of creek bed and bank physical conditions, water quality measurements, and fish and macro invertebrate diversity and abundance.

We have been supported magnificently by 35-40 willing enthusiastic volunteers who carry out the monitoring, and by BCC who have organised water monitoring equipment when we have needed it.

The first monitoring for 2014 was carried out in the first weekend in May. As usual water temperatures were quite low. Fish and macro-invertebrate numbers and diversity were quite good at the sites in the mid to lower part of the catchment but lower in the upper catchment sites. The creek bank and bed conditions for all sites were little changed from those in the late monitoring last year.

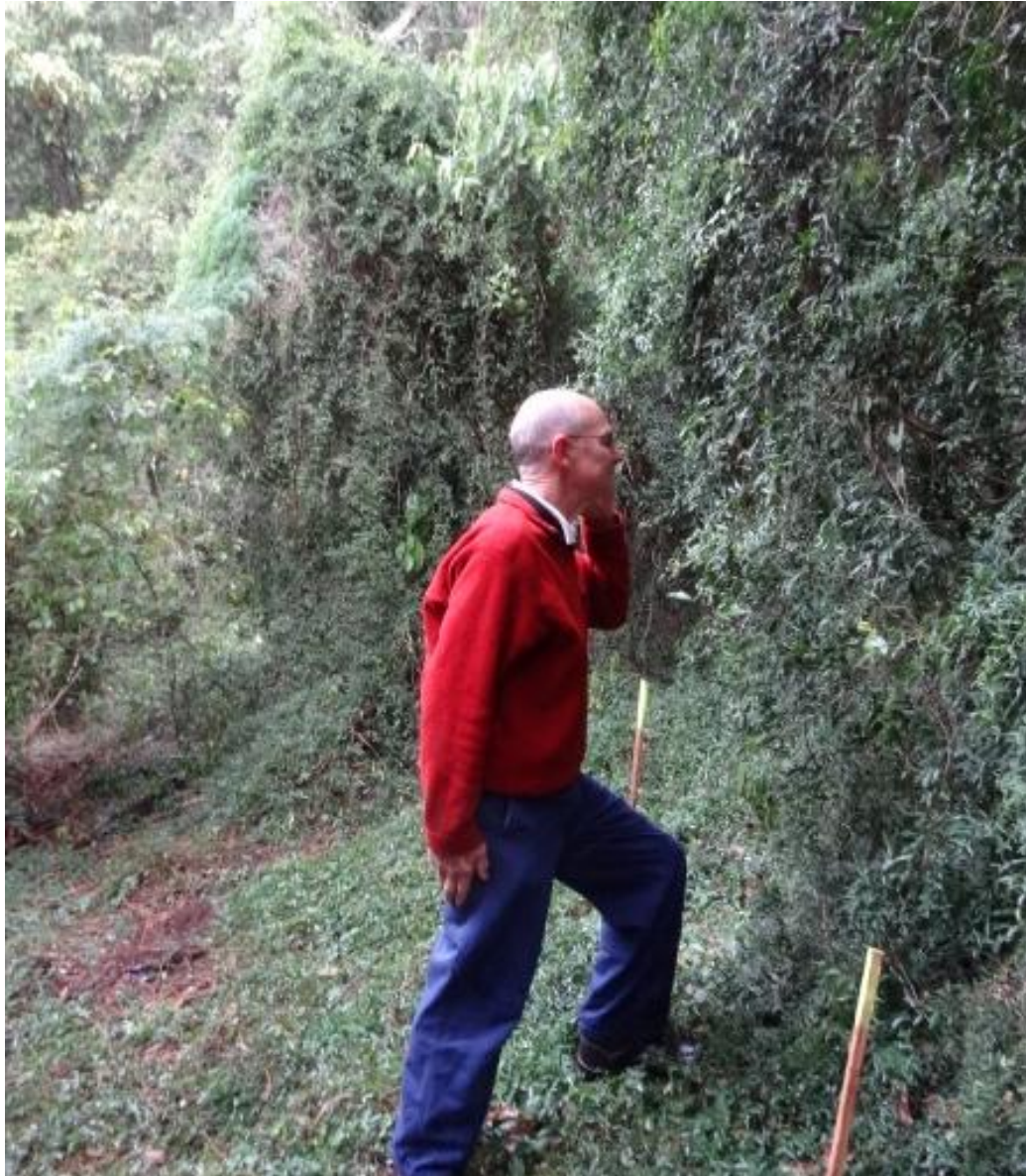
Generally, aquatic ecosystems of creeks within the Moggill Creek catchment are in relatively good condition:

- Water quality results were similar to those for previous sampling events.
- There was a relatively good diversity of sensitive and tolerant macro invertebrate species in most sites.
- Upwards of 800 fish from 15 species have been recorded throughout the catchment.
- The November 2013 monitoring was the first following those of the previous 2 wet years. We may see some clear changes in the creek conditions this November because of the much drier period since mid 2013.
- Senegal tea infestations have increased in size and vigour in the lower Gold Creek site (GC3) and the Tuckett Park site (MC5) on Moggill Creek. The Gold Creek site also has Glushweed another potentially serious exotic aquatic weed.
- Sagittaria has been identified in the upper Gold Creek site just below the Dam wall and removed.
- Phosphate levels in the lower Gold Creek site were high when compared to normal expected levels for freshwater in SEQ. Follow up sampling of the waste water outlet from Brookfield Village has indicated high levels of phosphates – 21ppm and elevated nitrates – 17ppm. These nutrients are highly likely to have exacerbated the aquatic weed growth in lower Gold Creek. There is little evidence of infestations of these weeds above this site. A report on our concerns about nutrient accessions to Gold Creek has been passed on to the Dept. Environment and Heritage Protection and the Brisbane City Council.
- Through Dr Bruce Flegg, we were able to get access to unspent Government funds, to help defray costs of equipment calibration and other analytical costs associated with monitoring water quality.
- An enhancement to the twice yearly monitoring of water quality in CHMP has commenced in response to encouragement from Cheryl McLeod of SEQ Catchments. The aim is to carry out the monthly measurements for 2

years to give a more detailed appreciation of the seasonal changes in water quality.

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3 Cat's Claw Creeper/ Invasive Vines Strategy (Adrian Webb, Gordon Grigg, Bryan Hacker, Warren Hoey)



Many landholders in the Moggill Creek catchment are already aware of the threats from cat's claw creeper to remnant forests and riparian zones. The vine climbs into the tree canopy, slowly smothering it and killing the trees. In the understorey, shrubs and smaller native plants are also smothered and killed, and a dense carpet often covers the ground surface. Some landholders have been battling this aggressive exotic vine from South America for several years, and have learned how difficult it is to remove or control.

The MCCG Committee has been working with the SEQ Catchments, Brisbane City Council and officers of Biosecurity Queensland to bring together information on

the ecological threats from this transformer weed; in addition they are collaborating in efforts to support landholders to control its spread particularly in our remnant forests. A comprehensive fact sheet compiled by Kym Johnston of Biosecurity Queensland outlines much of what is known about this vine and the current recommended control methods. It is available through the national weeds web site at <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/catsclawcreeper/>. Cat's claw creeper is distributed across many areas of remnant vegetation in Moggill Creek Catchment and some infestations are known to have been there for 20 years or more. The most severe infestations are in the moister lower slopes and drainage lines where the denser vegetation occurs.

A recent tour of three cat's claw infested properties in the catchment was funded by SEQ Catchments through the State Government Coastal Resilience Fund. The aims were to show concerned landholders what a devastatingly destructive plant it is, and to discuss ways in which infestations can be reduced or controlled. About 24 people took advantage of the offer which was held on 12 April. On the tour landholders shared their experiences with other participants and this led to several useful discussions on control methods and issues associated with them.

Although a number of the exotic transformer vines are known to be degrading ecosystems in the Moggill Creek Catchment, specific attention is being given to cat's claw creeper because it is not only one of the worst threats it is also regarded as one of the most difficult to control and eradicate. Information on cat's claw creeper and live examples of the plant were on display at the Brookfield Show this year. Also on show were other weed vines; Madeira vine, glycine and climbing asparagus.

How do we respond?

The general strategy being followed is to identify outlier sites and then try to direct control efforts into limiting further spread into important remnant vegetation; the next challenge is to focus on major infestations. Where it is possible, treating the weed across neighbouring properties has some benefits in reducing the level of further infestation in an area. We are particularly aware of this in those areas where infestations are on properties adjacent to or close to major conservation areas such as the Mt Coot-tha Forest and the adjoining D'Aguilar National Park. These regions include several identified conservation corridors supported by Brisbane City Council collaborative conservation agreements. Approximately 50 per cent of eligible properties (greater than half a hectare) in Moggill Creek Catchment are part of BCC's Wildlife Conservation Partnerships Program including a number of properties that have signed Voluntary Conservation Agreements or Voluntary Conservation Covenants. By focussing on those parts of the catchment where community engagement is already well advanced, significant environmental benefits can be achieved more efficiently in aspects such as more effective weed management, habitat enhancement and restoration of corridors. In 2012-14, approximately 100 landholders mainly in Kenmore Hills, upper Gold Creek, Savages Road and Upper Brookfield received funding assistance from the BCC or SEQ Catchments to fund work by contractors to spray cat's claw creeper and other exotic vines. This assistance was aimed at helping landholders get a level of control of cat's claw

creeper so they can manage it themselves in future years.

Current aims of the MCCG are:

- Provide good information on the skills and other resources needed to manage the infestations in the catchment. SEQ Catchments, BCC and Biosecurity Queensland are supporting communication and training activities for landholders seeking support on cat's claw management practices.
- Share information about new infestations with SEQ Catchments, BCC and landholders to help identify priority areas for assistance in control efforts. Although we have already quite a bit of information on infestations in the catchment, the MCCG Committee wants to make contact with all landholders in the catchment who have cat's claw infestations. The better the information we have the better the chance of getting on-ground support to battle this tree destroyer.
- Support landholders in gaining funds for on-ground treatment of Cat's claw creeper.

4 Annual Platypus Survey (Chris Hoskings)

The survey was very well supported again this year, with approximately 50 volunteers observing along the Moggill and Gold Creeks. The areas covered in the survey spanned Upper Brookfield, Upper Gold Creek to lower Moggill Creek near the mouth of the Brisbane River.

Good news

- Platypus are persisting in a patchy distribution throughout the catchment
- Eight individual platypus were seen, from 40 sites monitored

Not so good news

- Eight is at the lower end of our number observed annually. In the first survey in 2005, six individual platypus were seen and in the 2010 survey, 20 individual platypus were seen. In nearly all years since 2005, 15-25 has been a more common number seen
- Platypus appear to have disappeared or declined from historical stronghold areas such as upper Gold Creek, the Gold Creek Dam and the Huntington Estate in Brookfield

Summary

This is an invaluable annual snapshot of platypus in the Moggill Creek Catchment. Because it only occurs on one day, it is possible that more platypus are present than were observed. While it is encouraging that we are still seeing platypus in these local creeks, some as close as 10 km from the Brisbane CBD, ongoing human impacts on these peri-urban creeks is of concern.

These impacts include pollution, water extraction, recreational activities and possibly the extensive refurbishment of Gold Creek Dam in 2005-2006 that led to significant disturbance and the cessation of water flow into Gold Creek for some time. Interestingly, the sightings this year occurred in creek areas that are generally less disturbed, albeit sometimes weed-infested (e.g. molasses grass and lantana). For the platypus, weeds and minimal disturbance may be better options.

Thanks to the MCCG and the Brookfield Pony Club for providing the breakfast and facilities and a big thank you to the 'breakfast crew'; Richard, Gaynor, Dot and her sister for again providing us with a wonderful post-survey cooked breakfast!

5 Bird Project (Jim Butler)



Russett-tailed Thrush. Photo courtesy Ed Frazer.

Introduction:

The aims of the project are:

1. Record and monitor the birds in the catchment
2. Identify changes over time – and relate these to seasonal, vegetational, climate changes
3. Work with other organisations to provide a sound scientific base
4. Reach out to the community

Report on Aim 1:

It is well known that about 70% of the catchment's area is private property and we value the access kindly granted by our co-operating landholders - because it is the key to the success of the project .

The Songmeter acoustic recorders (Supplied by QUT) have again been used for the last 12 months. Recorders are placed on 8 properties, or 10 days each season, recording continuously rain, hail or shine. The data are taken to QUT, converted to sonograms, then 180 one-minute samples are selected per site per season and taggers identify or "tag" each bird calling in the samples.

Reports on each of the eight properties were sent to the landholders during this period. Each landholder received the list of birds on their property, and the lists from each of the other properties. The Report also detailed the vegetation types and botanical species at each site.

QUT has stored all of the data recorded on the eight private properties that we sample. This data is of immense value as a complex record of the birds in the Catchment and will be stored by QUT ad infinitum for future research projects. Our thanks to Jason Wimmer at QUT, Jason gives excellent support to the project.

Because of various factors in respect to recruiting taggers, the large amount of tagging time and equipment availability it has been decided to interrupt the Songmeter Acoustic recording aspect of the project at this stage. The Songmeters have been returned to QUT and hopefully they will be employed again in the future.

We have returned to monitoring the birds by the BirdLife Australia methodology.

Report on Aim 2

The project has as yet not generated enough data for this aim to be progressed. Towards the end of the five year life of the Project, this aim will become the main focus.

Report on Aim 3

We have continued our close working relationship with the staff at QUT and UQ.

We have made progress with the botanical characterisation of our eight sites. Nic McCaffrey & Cam Kilgour, botanists from the Centre for the Rehabilitation of Mining Sites at UQ have coded the vegetation types and botanical species at the eight sites. This scientific information is essential to achieving Aim 2.

We have needed to send queries on bird calls to various experts in universities and bird organisations.

Report on Aim 4

Reaching out to the community is an important aim of the project. One of us (Jim) continues to write monthly articles on birds for THE LOCAL BULLETIN.

The articles have generated a steady stream of feedback. Contacts from readers have led to help with injured birds, explanations of bird behaviours that readers have puzzled about; and identification of birds people have observed. Jim has met and gone birding with some of the readers who have contacted him.

Jim has continued giving bird presentations at PROBUS club and Garden clubs.

Jim and Ian gave a paper at the inaugural Queensland Ornithological Conference at The University of Queensland in May 2014. The title of the paper was: "The Acoustical Structure of the Songs of the Three Brisbane Fairy-wrens". This work was undertaken because the taggers were finding that the three Fairy-wren sonograms were not able to be reliably distinguished when the recording were being tagged. This paper led to a reliable way of validly naming the Fairy-wren that had sung the recorded songs.

Conclusion: Much has been achieved, with a lot of generous help, in the second year of the project. The future for the project includes: more community outreach; using standard BirdLife Australia survey methods to collect the data. Our warm thanks to everyone who has helped us on this fabulous journey to help the birds in our Catchment.

6 MCCG Small Grants Scheme

In early 2013, after much discussion and debate, the management committee decided to allocate a small amount of surplus funds towards weed control and revegetation on private lands. These occupy about 70% of the catchment and yet few schemes are available to assist landowners who wish to do such works on their land. One very positive exception is the Brisbane City Council's Community Conservation Assistance Program that offers assistance to Land for Wildlife participants. As a result of the Committee's decision, the MCCG Small Grants Scheme was developed and advertised to members in July 2013. From time to time, through careful financial management and receipt of donations, it is hoped that MCCG may have enough funds to offer a similar scheme at some time in the future.

The aim of the 2013 Scheme was to assist private land owners with weed control and revegetation.

The primary emphasis in the award of grants was the merit of the project, evidenced by a well-designed proposal that:

- addressed a significant problem for the landholder;
- addressed the wider benefit of bushland regeneration in the catchment; and,
- provided a plan for ongoing maintenance of the target site.

While not in any way restricted to, the Committee was particularly keen to see proposals that provided opportunities for the development of habitat corridors, and applications from landholders on adjoining properties.

Types of activities supported by the 2013 Scheme:

- Activities that extended and complemented existing or recently restored corridors/habitats;
- Weed removal in bushland on the landholder's property;
- Revegetation after weed removal with locally indigenous plants;
- Restoration of a previously cleared area with locally indigenous species.

Nine landholders were successful in gaining funding support for revegetation and weed control works with a total of almost \$20,000 being granted. We will be evaluating the effectiveness of this scheme in the coming year.

Reflecting and Looking Ahead

I can recall my first impressions of Brookfield in the mid-fifties. For a kid from the other side of the city, I thought it was a very wild place. My grandmother's stories of growing up in the bush had coloured my imagination so much that Brookfield seemed like a different country, both exciting and dangerous. The memories of being able to enjoy the relative informality of a small rural community will stay with me forever. Our 5 acre block was small by local standards but it felt huge to me. We were allowed to roam and ride around the district quite freely and there was plenty to see and do particularly along the creeks. At that time I did not appreciate the history of European settlement nor its impacts over the previous century. Such a scale was beyond me at that age let alone the prior occupation by indigenous peoples for tens of thousands of years. I was only interested in what was in front of me.

Most of the farms have now been replaced by acreage blocks and estates. The local population has increased many fold and nearly all residents do not earn their living from the land they occupy. The utility of the land therefore means something different to what it did to our forebears. A 'concern for the environment' is a part of our lexicon and indeed our laws and practices. Nowadays we rarely see people clearing the vegetation, especially the trees to allow better grazing for livestock. Not far from where I now live, I can now see semi-open woodland where once it was cleared from fence to fence and only grass grew for cattle and horses to eat. Europeans and indigenous peoples changed the landscape by the way they used it by using fire, introducing new plant species, removing unwanted ones, cultivating the soil and changing the hydrology.

Recent human intervention has changed landscape dynamics often without our having enough knowledge to be able to predict all of the outcomes. It is only in relatively recent times that we have become conscious of the need to measure environmental outcomes as well as economic ones and have started to rehabilitate the ecosystems we need for life. For eons we have congratulated ourselves on our ability to 'harness nature'. Can we work in an enduring partnership with it? It will take a different type of courage undeterred by shifting

political attitudes to take this path for the global task is huge and the local work is urgent.

So what can we do locally? If I take the example of my peers, we do not sit on our hands and wait for governments to do it! In a society that expects governments to do more with less, the competition for those resources is huge. We have to work in partnership with levels of government but not be their servant. The MCCG prides itself on knowing how our catchment works and how urbanization is impacting on it. Our members are highly motivated towards doing practical and useful works that have both short and long term environmental benefits. It is literally a "ground up" approach that will endure.

The MCCG depends on its volunteers. It's the lifeblood of our bushcare groups and all of our projects rely on their input. Our ability to place experienced and motivated people at the doing end of a problem is one of our great strengths. We are always after more volunteers, however in this increasingly busy world we realize that competition for your attention and time is greater than ever. We would like to know from you how we can better engage you in our activities. We know that early experience of volunteering is important in determining future intentions so your involvement will have a profound effect on that of the next generations in your family.

Australia, according to a report commissioned by Volunteering Australia in 2012, has a culture of volunteering ranking in the top 3 in the world. In 2010, 6.1 million adult Australians volunteered their time in an unpaid role. Most of this is in the sport and recreation area, particularly amongst males. The total annual value of volunteering in 2007 was estimated to exceed \$15b. With the ageing of our population there will be increasing competition for and need for volunteers, hence the need to be able to offer more flexible roles for those still in the workforce. We are keen to do just that.

One of the questions that I often ask myself is "What services will governments fund in the future with a shrinking tax base from which to fund them?" I have little doubt that part of the answer lies in governments working more cooperatively and effectively with community groups such as ours. One challenge for governments is how does it get the outcomes it wants without suffocating volunteers in bureaucratic processes and demotivating them?

There is no doubt in my mind that genuine sharing of relevant information and plans, a commitment to joint problem solving, face to face interaction with government staff who know and are interested in the catchment makes a positive difference to the way we can plan and execute our projects (CCC). It gets difficult when we have to deal with faceless and unsympathetic people in bureaucracy who have no desire to assist. We understand that managers get nervous if they think that their employees get 'captured' by the community in which they work. But that risk is small.

Our Creek Catchment Officer is a very competent and hard working person but the design of the role keeps her at a distance from the MCCG that does not get the best outcomes from the relationship. Recently I remarked to her that the interaction we have had over the operation of a CCA project has been more

productive and could help to bring the role into greater contact with the group. As you can hear from the section reports, we very much appreciate the support we have received from HB through their local coordinator. Our LFW officers are second to none and our dealings with SEQ Catchments through their Community Partnerships Manager has been very rewarding.

At an administrative level, the design of suitable programs is critical. The CCA program is one such excellent example as it allows works to be done on private land as does the State Governments Everyone's Environment Program.

In 2011, the MCCG completed a review of its achievements over the period 1998-2010. A number of recommendations followed and I referred to some of them in my report to you last year. In the near future we will need to once again assess our performance against the objectives we have set.

You may have noticed that we obtain most of our income not from membership subscriptions but from funds tied to particular projects. In the latter case we have had to compete with other applicants for funding from government programs in the main. There are a lesser number of private sector sources where we have had success in previous years. The application process is hard work and requires considerable research in order to mount a compelling argument to fund the project. Where do the ideas come from in the first place?

The aforementioned Review highlighted areas requiring attention. These included: Restoring habitat corridors from riparian areas to the hills; Better management of exotic weeds, especially vine weeds and aquatic weeds; rehabilitation of riparian zones. Advice from our members through the "Friends of Moggill Creek" forum led to the establishment of the Creek Health Monitoring Program. At the completion of the MCCG Review in 2011, Malcolm Frost chaired a small group tasked with identifying projects for the years ahead. Projects associated with Pacey Rd project, Smith's Scrub and Cat's Claw got some momentum from that process. Malcolm will be repeating that process in the months ahead and I would invite any of you to submit ideas for future work.

I want to finish by mentioning the efforts of Dick Tumman, an ardent naturalist who knows this country well as he has walked a good bit of it. He also has a soft spot for the history of the Upper Gold Creek area and in particular the heritage listed Gold Creek dam but that's another story and one worth listening to. Dick has provided me with this aerial photo looking across the upper parts of our catchment. From this perspective one can't help but be impressed by the almost unbroken expanse of green vegetation stretching to the horizon. Such a scene lifts one's spirit.

There are a couple of points worth making about it that may seem very obvious to the locals. First, our settlements are on the doorstep of the nearest thing we will see to a wilderness in this catchment. Beyond the dam is Brisbane Forest Park which immediately adjoins the D'Aguilar National Park. The proximity of this heritage and its unique natural environment to our G20 city is not nearly as well appreciated as it should be.

On a recent walk to water some blue quandongs planted above the dam Dick

came across “ 3 old blokes, much like myself, having a brew early in the morning in the bed of GCK. These bushwalkers knew the area intimately over many years and had travelled extensively overseas and stated there was nowhere in their travels that could equate to BFP so close to a major city. At every opportunity they went bushwalking in BFP.”

But all is not as it seems, and this is the second point. The impacts of creeping urbanization (and the way we manage these lands) continues to pose a significant threat to these ecosystems. The effects of past grazing practices, timber removal, burning, visitation, culling vast populations of flying foxes in the Enoggera scrubs and even hunting pigeons for food are there for the trained eye to observe.

Unfortunately we are now seeing hot spots of dangerous weed infestations cropping up. Weeds such as Cat’s Claw, Yellow Bells, Dutchman’s pipe and the aquatic weed, Saggitaria. How do we know this? Mainly because people such as Dick take the time to look for them. Is it his job? No. Why does he do it? Because he cares about the long term future of this neck of the woods that is vital to the health of our catchment.

And yes, we have been in regular contact with the land managers, SEQWater about these weeds and pleasingly they have been responding well. The point is that detection is difficult and requires close and persistent observation. We try hard to know our catchment as well as possible, map it and use that as the basis for our work plans. These landscapes need to be actively managed. The presence of such aggressive threats to the ecology cannot be ignored because they are invisible to most of us.

I commend the report to you.



Appendix

More photos from Damien Egan







More photos from Jim Pope



Attendees at the function for Malcolm and Robyn Frost in Creekside Park on 21st Sept. 2014



Malcolm and Robyn Frost (21st Sept. 2014)



Malcolm and Robyn Frost (21st Sept. 2014)



Malcolm and Robyn with Cath Cleary (Habitat Brisbane) and John Brew (21st Sept. 2014)



Tuckett Park - Zone B (28th March 2014)



Tuckett Park - Zone J (28th March 2014)



Creekside Park - Zone E (28th March 2014)