

Moggill Creek Catchment Group Annual Platypus Survey 10th September 2017

It was a beautiful morning with no sign of rain, even though we desperately need it.

We had an outstanding number of volunteers this year, 76 in total, who eagerly turned up before 4.30am to start.

Even with such a dry winter and pools looking shallower, we had a successful morning with 15 sightings (Fig 1). Reading people's descriptions of times and behaviours, there are possibly 12 individuals that were active that morning. It is always very hard to determine individual identification of such a species, but the number is consistent for the catchment with key areas still having platypuses, such as Kilkivan Avenue, Huntington Estate and mid to lower Gold Creek. Upper Brookfield was lucky again at Mumford Bridge and even two animals spotted in the fig tree pool. An exciting addition after a long time of negative results was a sighting at the Smith Rainforest Reserve. We covered a lot of sites with so many people and I appreciate the effort even if you weren't lucky to see one. Negative results are just as important as positives as we can determine patterns in their distribution across the catchment.

The habitat quality is also consistent from fair to good results, with no major changes from last year. The MCCG land care groups are on top of protecting the creeks as they are always doing a great job at rehabilitating the banks. This is very important for platypuses as they need stable, high banks for burrowing and nesting sites. We are towards the end of breeding season now and the females will be laying and incubating eggs, therefore they need stable banks that will not collapse. Juveniles will emerge from the nest around February at approximately 80% grown, where they will make their own way in the catchment and we will hopefully see them next year!

I cannot thank the team leaders enough for their efforts as well as Dot and her Girl Guide helpers for cooking breakfast and the ongoing support and organisation from Richard and Cathie.

A big thank you to all the volunteers for making this a successful morning.
Tamielle Brunt

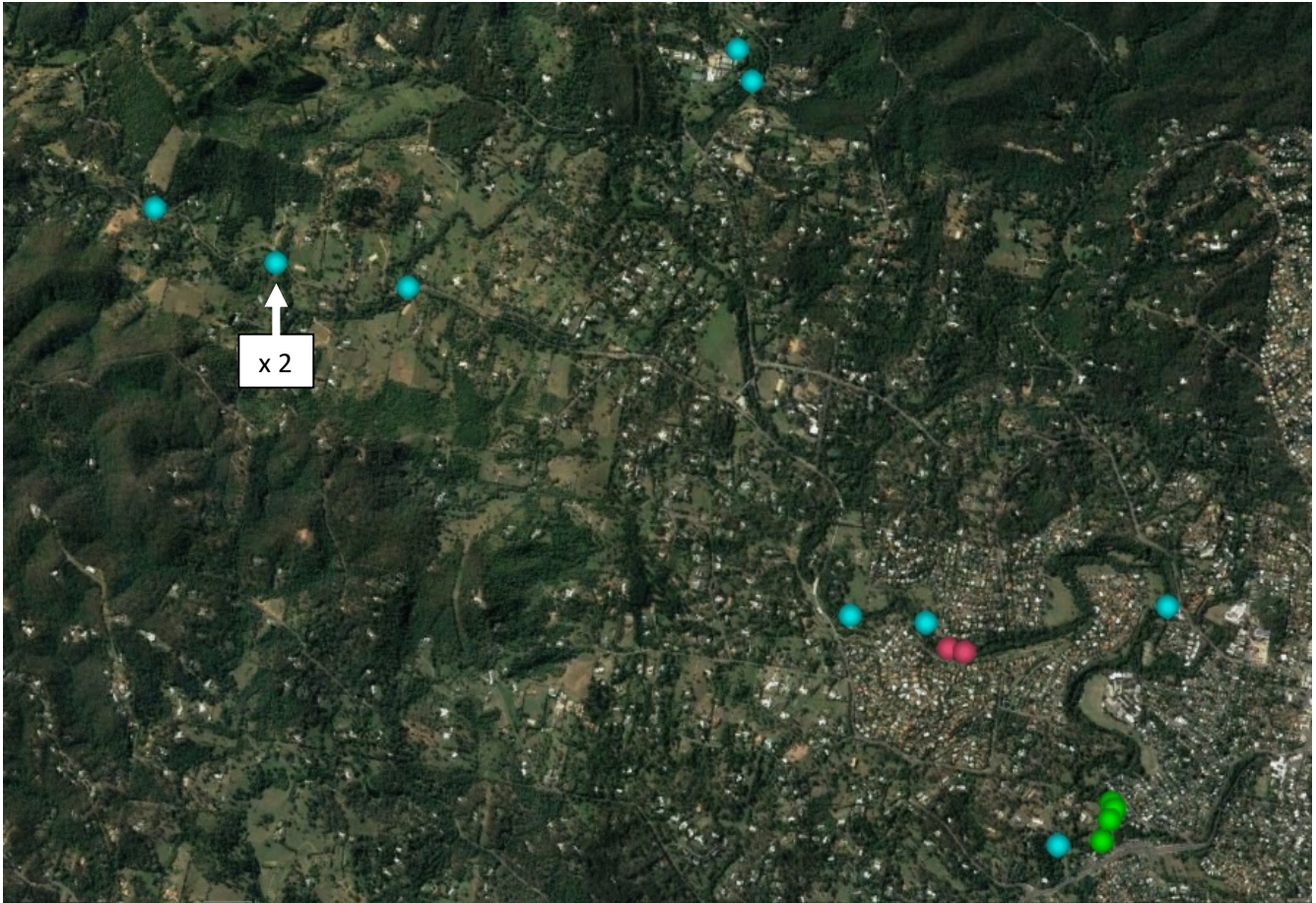


Figure 1. Fifteen sightings of platypuses across Moggill and Gold Creek which equated to 12 possible individuals due to times and directions described on the observation sheets. The green and pink dots are representing one individual travelling between sites. Two platypuses were recorded at the fig tree pool in Upper Brookfield.



Figure 2. Jasmin Bourne was lucky to have a morning with a platypus at the Adavale Street site.