

MCCG 2016 Platypus Survey

There was much needed rain on Saturday and I was dreading the state of the creeks for the survey on Sunday. Nineteen mm was recorded at the Gold Creek reservoir in 24 hours. The rain eased overnight and a beautiful day came upon us, with the creeks left murky and flowing at a reasonable pace.

With the assistance of an amazing number of volunteers (71) dispersed along Gold and Moggill Creeks, we were able to cover many observation sites.

Our survey results yielded 11 platypus sightings in total, with two platypuses being seen at one site at Branton Street, Kenmore and a total of three animals seen in this section. This is exciting as we haven't seen this many platypuses in that location for a few years. Overall, platypus' were seen across a broad spatial scale. They were seen in Moggill Creek and Gold Creek in Upper Brookfield, near Brookfield Produce, in the Huntington Estate, near Kenmore High School and in lower Moggill Creek in the Kilkivan/Manyung streets area.

Another exciting discovery was a platypus seen close to the Gold Creek dam on Gold Creek. They haven't been seen that far up the creek since the refurbishment of the wall that may have disturbed them back in 2005. And it could have possibly been a pair! Platypus weren't platypus possum that morning; a few people recorded seeing them multiple times at their site rather than just a brief glimpse.

The creek habitat assessments conducted by the volunteers during the survey were similar throughout the catchment's survey sites, with only two records of very poor quality habitat. Most people were recording their creek areas as fair to good.

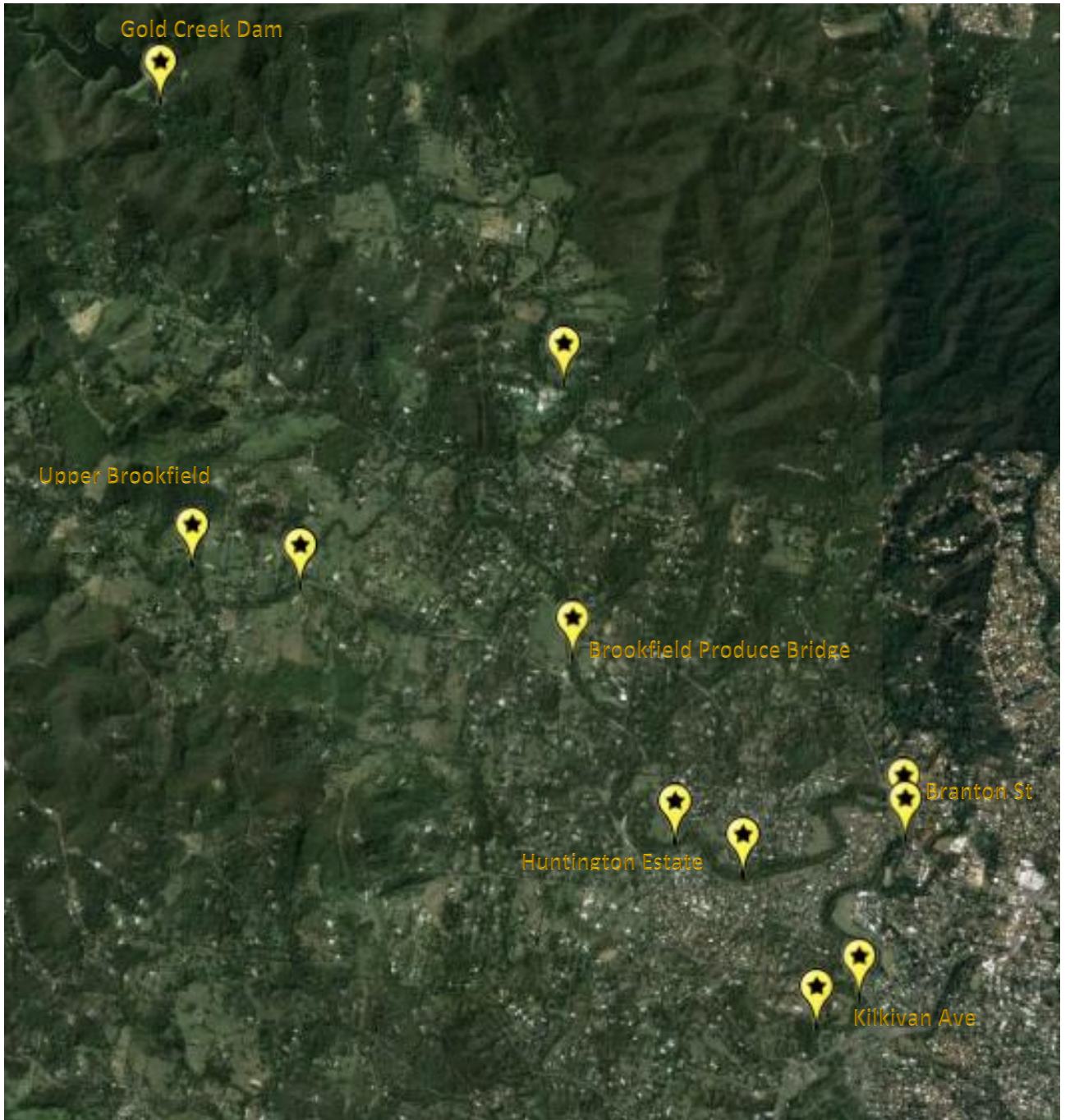
The sites where 11 platypus' were seen varied from fair to good with in-stream and bank erosion and stability recorded as good to excellent. This coincides with a platypus' ability to forage for food among logs, snags and cobbled substrate. These in-stream crevices also protect the platypus' food from being washed away, so thankfully this was the case Sunday morning.

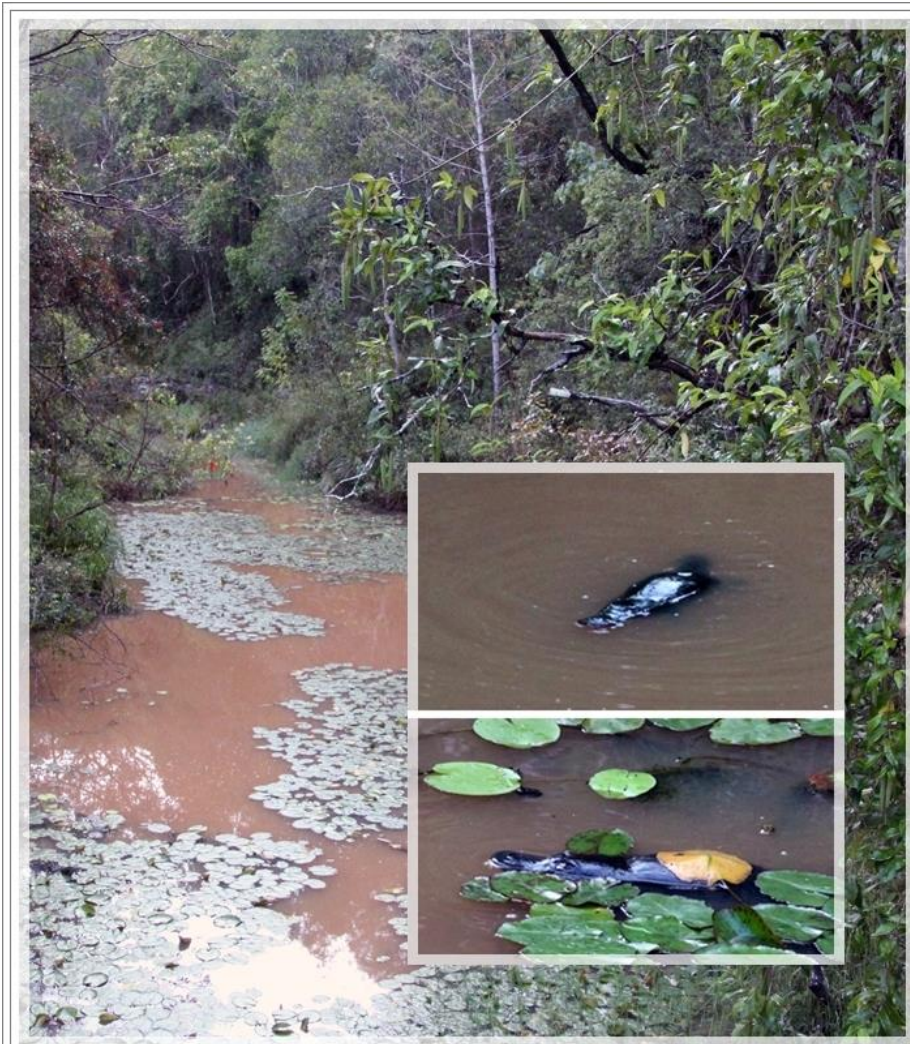
Overhanging vegetation also conceals burrow entrances, as well as protection for the platypus when foraging. Bank stability is highly important for platypus' burrows and nest sites. Reducing erosion with native vegetation keeps the banks intact and less likely for burrows to collapse in a flood event. The continued rehabilitation work of the MCCG allows restoration of banks within the catchment and helps buffer against flooding impacts.

This has been the 11th year for the MCCG annual platypus survey and not only is it keeping an eye on platypus within the area, it's helping promote and educate the community on the importance of conservation.

Thank you to the MCCG, breakfast crew, team leaders and the volunteers for another successful year!

Tamielle Brunt.





Platypus Survey (Gold Creek Reservoir)

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Alison Armstrong 11th Sept 2016