



# MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

MOGGILL NEWS-FEBRUARY 2001

## NEWSLETTER OF MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

### The Field Officer's Report (February 2001)

Thanks to the rain at the beginning of this month the MCCMG plantings are once again growing well. The dry spell experienced last spring certainly put some pressure on our planting sites but our water trailer and pump ensured that we were able to keep the water up to them. I was concerned with the possibility of flood damage but on inspection after the waters receded found the damage not as bad as I had expected. Some of our sites need some minor erosion control and I will be supplying plants specifically for this purpose to those areas. Currently the MCCMG has planted approximately 11 000 plants on public land and approximately 6 000 on private lands.

Our nursery continues to prosper, largely thanks to our volunteers who are now able to prick out approximately 1000 seedlings each morning that they work there. As they can achieve so much, their visits are restricted to times when there is enough space in the nursery to store all the plants they produce! The MCCMG water quality monitoring kit is currently doing the second rotation of the catchment. Thanks to the recent rain, some of the sites that were dry have been refilled so it will be interesting to see if there are any notable differences from the results of the first sample.

A new initiative I have started has been to remove myself from the on-ground activities at working bees. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, I am concerned that some of the working bee groups will have trouble functioning without me in the leadership and organisational role. I hope to be able to identify any problems that Section Leaders are having and work out ways to overcome any difficulties. Almost all of the working bee groups will receive support from the Brisbane City Council once NHT funding ceases so it is essential that these groups are able to liaise with BCC staff when I am no longer present. Secondly, I have started a program to work more closely with private landowners. As there are 80 landowners now participating I have given them all the opportunity to apply for support from the MCCMG with their projects. This not only gets the landowners to think in detail about what they want to achieve but also allows for more accurate reporting to NHT on the in-kind support that these landowners are contributing. This in-kind support will be very beneficial in future applications for funding as it demonstrates the strong support that the MCCMG has from the community.

**Michael Reif**

## Some thoughts from the Chairman

This is the first newsletter since the appointment of a new Committee at our AGM last November. Somewhat reluctantly, I agreed to take on the Chairmanship of the Group. Gordon Grigg has led the Group since its inception and his will be a hard act to follow. It was through Gordon and under his leadership that the group defined its objectives, sought and obtained funding from Natural Heritage Trust, appointed Michael Reif and set up the system of 13 sub-groups which have been working effectively along the creeks in our catchment.

This year there will be a number of changes to our operations. As we approach the end of this period of NHT funding it will be necessary for our eight Bushcare groups operating on public land to become more fully self-sufficient. By a similar token, the other focus of the MCCMG, the rehabilitation of private land, needs to be brought to a sustainable level by the end of the year – currently, 80 landholders receive support from our co-ordinator Michael Reif. So this year Michael will devote a higher proportion of his time to working on private land. Section Leaders will therefore need to plan ahead, requesting delivery of plants, herbicide and equipment from Michael in advance of their Working Bees.

The other change – at the request of the general meeting following the AGM – is to have a mid-year public meeting at the Brookfield Hall, with a guest speaker. This year the proposal is for a talk on the early history of the Brookfield area. Watch this space for more details!!

Since the AGM there have been several changes to your Committee. Frank Rudd has indicated his wish to step down from his position as Honorary Secretary – thank you, Frank for a job well done. Robyn Frost has volunteered to take up the reins, and now we have a new face on the Committee as Publicity Officer, Jack Talty. In this issue we list contact numbers for MCCMG Office Bearers.

We have recently been advised that there could be an opportunity for a further period of funding from the NHT for the period October 2001 – September 2002. I am working closely with Brad Wilson and Michael Reif in an attempt to secure funds for this period, to extend the work we have started in our catchment.

Bryan Hacker

### Phone numbers and email addresses for MCCMG Office Bearers

Chairman	Bryan Hacker	3374 1468	jbhacker@powerup.com.au
Deputy Chairman	John Smith	3374 1098	nil
Secretary	Robyn Frost	3374 0649	mtf@bigpond.com
Treasurer	Barbara Cox	3374 1640	Barbern@powerup.com.au
Public Relations Officer	Jack Talty	3374 1738	nil
Photography Competition	Judy Gower	3878 4790	j.gower@gcsq.org.au
Co-ordinator	Michael Reif	3300 4855	Michael.Reif@dnr.qld.gov.au

## Section Leaders

Sect. 1 (Pullenvale Rd/Moons Lane)	-		
Sect. 2 (Lower Moggill Ck)	Rob Waller	3378 9979	Nil
Sect. 3 (Huntington)	Malcolm Frost	3374 0649	<a href="mailto:mtf@bigpond.com.au">mtf@bigpond.com.au</a>
Sect. 4 (Showgrounds)	John Rogers	3374 3391	nil
Sect. 5 (Haven Rd)	John Smith	3374 1098	nil
Sect. 6 (Upper Brookfield)	Michelle St Baker	3374 4171	<a href="mailto:michelle.stbaker@elp.com.au">michelle.stbaker@elp.com.au</a>
Sect. 7 (Gold Ck Reserve)	Brad Wilson	3300 4855	<a href="mailto:Wilsonbd@dnr.qld.ov.au">Wilsonbd@dnr.qld.ov.au</a>
Sect. 8 (Wonga Ck)	Gordon Wilkinson	3374 1576	nil
	Graeme Wilson	3374 1218	nil
Sect. 9 (Upper Gold Ck)	Gordon Grigg	3374 1737	<a href="mailto:gerigg@zoology.uq.edu.au">gerigg@zoology.uq.edu.au</a>
	Frank Rudd	3374 1859	<a href="mailto:shorud@ecn.net.au">shorud@ecn.net.au</a>
Sect. 10 (Lower Gold Ck)	-		
Sect 10a (Resthaven)	Dylan Bowker	33710454	<a href="mailto:dylanbowker@l.net.au">dylanbowker@l.net.au</a>
Sect. 11 (McKay Brook)	Bryan Hacker	3374 1468	<a href="mailto:jbhacker@powerup.com.au">jbhacker@powerup.com.au</a>
Sect. 12 (Gap Ck)	Michael Humphreys	3374 1467	<a href="mailto:MH@humanfactors.uq.edu.au">MH@humanfactors.uq.edu.au</a>
Sect. 13 (Mt Coot-tha Park)	John McKenzie	3407 0013	<a href="mailto:lnacw@brisbane.qld.gov.au">lnacw@brisbane.qld.gov.au</a>

### Around the Catchment: Huntington Section

In the Huntington Section of the Catchment, Moggill Creek traverses an area of mainly open parklands bordered by the housing subdivisions of Huntington, Brookfield Meadows, Tuckett and Kensington.

Regular monthly working bees have been held since May 1998 at 2 sites. The first site, in a small gully adjacent to 76 Creekside St was cleared to reveal some existing indigenous vegetation, including jagera and red kamala. Main weed species were madeira vine, prickly caesalpinia, cestrum, chinese elm, camphor laurel, tobacco and castor oil plants.

A second site in a more prominent position was later established at the creek crossing adjacent to the Huntington bicycle track and below Boyd Terrace. The aim here is to clear along the bank towards Rafting Ground Road and open up the banks about the water hole. Long term residents have fond memories of swimming and picnicking about this pool.

Weed species and canopy damage have been the same at both sites. Preparation for plantings included hand weeding, spraying, removal of some weed trees and the use of old carpets as weed suppressants.

Plantings at the sites have been varied and numerous, probably amounting to at least 1200. The growth rate has been amazing in places, but as Michael Reif remarked, we probably have the best soil in the Catchment. Certainly the recent flooding of the creek and the associated deposition would suggest the reasons for this.

Work at both sites has been done by some enthusiastic volunteers (generally 10-15) assisted by Habitat Brisbane Officers at first and then by the Catchment Field Officer, Michael Reif. Since we now have official Habitat Brisbane status, our future challenge will be to work independently without the "hands on" participation of our Field Officer. This will test the Habitat Brisbane training that several of the group members have received! I have

established a third site, at the end of Crompton Street.

Last year, in an attempt to foster greater interest and involvement by the local residents, we arranged for 2 early morning bird walks to be led by Dawn Muir from the Queensland Ornithological Society. Few locals attended. It would seem that it is as difficult to eradicate madeira vine as it is to attract a large number of workers to our working bees.

**Malcolm Frost, Section Leader**

Is your membership up to date?

Do you know any local residents who could become members?

Additional membership forms are available from the Secretary, P.O. Box 657, Kenmore 4069.

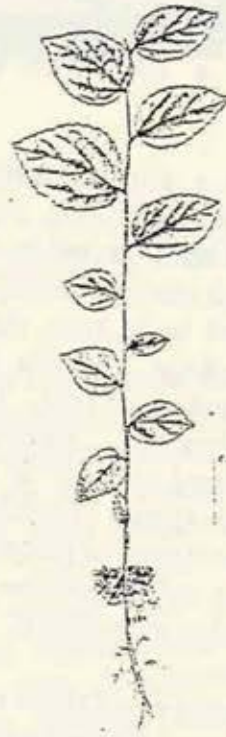
Annual membership is only \$5.50.

## Some trees which cause weed problems in our area

Some of the trees which have been introduced into southern Queensland are causing serious weed problems in areas of native forests.

Amongst the more significant in west Brisbane are **camphor laurel** (*Cinnamomum camphora*) and **Chinese elm** (*Celtis sinensis*), originally from Asia, and **tipuana** (*Tipuana tipu*) and **jacaranda** (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*) from South America. Jacaranda, tipuana and camphor laurel were introduced as ornamentals; Chinese elm was introduced about fifty years ago as a shade tree for livestock. All are very attractive trees, especially jacaranda, but those fortunate enough to live on bushland properties should resist the temptation to plant them. Having said that, I feel a little guilty about the fifty-year-old jacaranda outside my study window, and I can fully understand those who are reluctant to chop down a beautiful tree. But I am forever pulling up jacaranda seedlings in my area of eucalypt woodland, and, were I to start afresh, I certainly would not plant one.

The **Chinese elm** is undoubtedly the most aggressive and undesirable weed tree along Moggill Creek and its tributaries. It is a deciduous tree with simple leaves about 6 cm long, with toothed margins. It is tolerant of infertile, stoney soils but also grows well along creeksides and on more fertile soils. The problem with it is that it crowds out our native trees, especially along the creeks, and competes with them for nutrients and water. Within a few years, what had been a diverse riverine rainforest becomes a solid stand of Chinese elm. It produces huge numbers of fruit, which are distributed by birds, and the seedlings grow quickly, being unpalatable to native insects. Seedlings are readily identifiable, with alternate leaves arranged in a single plane (see drawing). They are quite easy to pull out when young, and that is the time to catch them.



Drawing: Chinese elm seedling

**Camphor laurel**, like Chinese elm, is spread by birds eating the fruit. It is a handsome tree, and is readily recognised when mature, although seedlings may be confused with some natives, such as the cheese tree. However, it is readily identified by the scent of camphor, when leaves are crushed. It is most at home in moist situations along creeks, and is rarely seen around our part of the world on hillsides. Along some creeks (especially parts of Gap Creek) the only tree to be seen is camphor laurel.

**Jacaranda** is not such a problem as camphor laurel or Chinese elm. Trees fruit sparsely, and the fruit splits to release seeds which may be carried on the wind for some distance. It is very tolerant of infertile soils and survives well on stoney hillsides in eucalypt forests or woodlands. It does not appear to crowd out native trees.

Nevertheless, it is not a species which we would want to see as a feature of our eucalypt woodlands.

**Tipuana** became a popular tree about thirty years ago. It has yellow flowers, which appear in October. Flowers are followed by single-seeded fruit, each of which has a long wing, enabling the fruit to be carried quite long distances when conditions are windy. Unlike jacaranda, it produces large numbers of fruit. The leaves are pinnate, and dark green. Although it is not currently considered to be a major weed problem, seedlings appear in eucalypt woodland hundreds of meters from the parent tree, and it is likely to become a serious problem in the future, unless steps are taken to control it.

Photo: Fruit of tipuana



**The best way to kill all of these trees is with a 50% solution of roundup in water.** Trees may be cut down and the stumps immediately (within 15 seconds) sprayed with the roundup solution. Alternatively, the bark may be scraped in a few places with a light axe (do not ringbark the tree) and the blazed area sprayed with roundup. Quite often the single treatment does not kill the tree, but it usually succumbs if the new sprouts are cut off and the scars re-sprayed.

**Bryan Hacker**

Remember to visit our display at the Brookfield Show.

