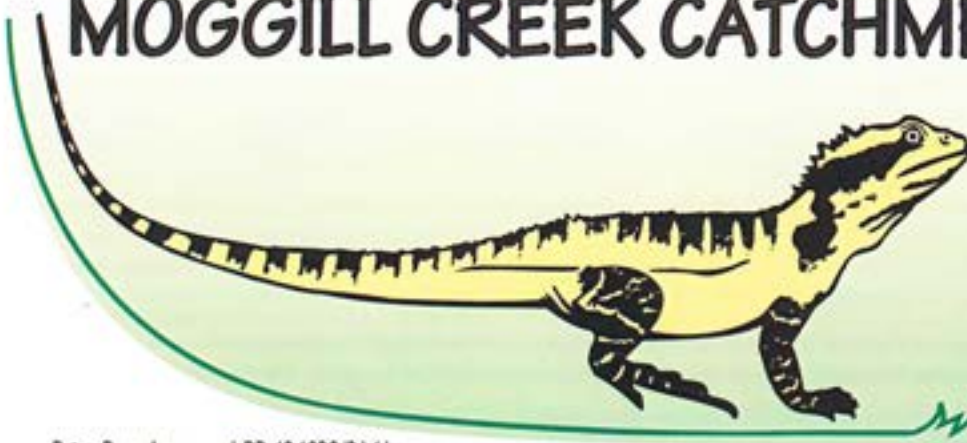


# MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

www.moggillcreek.org.au



Print Post Approved PP 424022/2141

## NEWSLETTER

## SPRING 2012



▲ Billy wombat (see Kids' Day, p. 4)  
Photo: Dale Borgelt



▲ Jewellery makers (see Kids' Day, p. 4)  
Photo: Dale Borgelt



◀ Glowvine (see New Weed, p. 8)

American volunteers (see More Birdwing Vines, p. 6)  
Photo: Greg Sipeen



▲ Glossy-black cockatoo (see Glossy-black, p. 4)  
Photo: Glossy-black Conservancy

## Editorial

*Many Members know little of what those actively involved really do. Some have an idea that we fill in our time just planting trees. A look at our newsletter provides a snapshot of what occupies our time and thinking. So read this issue.*

*Our Chairman is confronted by bad news from BCC which provides us with substantial support. Committee and Special Meetings have discussed what we can do. We have a long way to go.*

*Members engaged in revegetation are usually in need of helpful information of varied kinds. Here, we have the usual article on native plants and in particular their identification. The article on weed waste deals with an important problem while that on soil damage explains a not widely appreciated undesirable activity.*

*We have special projects beyond standard revegetation. One monitors the biological health of creeks. Another, like the longrunning Richmond Birdwing Recovery which we assist by growing and planting an essential plant species, which we are now entering is the Glossy-black Cockatoo recovery by growing the necessary plants.*

*The article on a new weed in our district is interesting, following on from our last issue which emphasized the importance of thorough elimination of new arrivals before they spread.*

*There are many things which we can't do well enough, either because we lack the manpower or skills or finance and are most grateful for assistance. Examples here are the mechanized earthmoving which moved us ahead in preparing the site for the new shadehouse, the American volunteers who added substantially to our Richmond Birdwing Vine plantings and the grant from Energex which will allow the Section 12 project to progress greatly.*

*Then we have the special public events; the spectacularly successful Kids' Day and notice of the next Talk at The Cottage.*

Moggill Creek Catchment Group is a volunteer action group aiming to conserve and improve the natural environment of its catchment on both private and public land.

**Chairman:** Malcolm Frost

**Secretary:** Deb Ford

Correspondence to be addressed to the Secretary at:

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore 4069

E-mail: [mccgsecretary@live.com.au](mailto:mccgsecretary@live.com.au)

This Newsletter is published quarterly, scheduled for early March, June, September and December. It is distributed to members. Articles may be cited but should not be reproduced without consent of the authors who alone are responsible for the views expressed. Illustrations are copyright and should not be reproduced without permission of the author and MCCG.

*Editor:* Graeme Wilson, Ph. 3374 1218

*Email:* [zzzgrw@bigpond.com](mailto:zzzgrw@bigpond.com)

*Formatting:* Margaret Hastie

*Printing:* John Gower

Proudly supported by Brisbane City Council



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

## Chairman's Report

Disappointingly, without any consultation with Catchment Groups, Council has reduced the number of Creek Rangers from about 11 to 4. Creek Rangers provide support for Catchment Groups throughout Brisbane. With the money saved, Council has created a new \$600K annual granting body named the Lord Mayor's Natural Areas Partnership Assistance program which will be available to Catchment Groups but at the time of going to press, there are yet no details of the method of allocation. Additional funding has been also made to the Wipe out Weeds fund and to Land for Wild Life but again MCCG has not been provided with details on these budget increases or whether Catchments have direct access to these funds.

MCCG has had a full time Creek Ranger since the positions were created by the then Lord Mayor Campbell Newman about ten years ago. Creek Rangers have made significant contributions to the operation of our organisation and to the functioning of specific projects such as Kids' Day, the Creek Health Monitoring Program and the development of a Land Owners' Bushcare Group at Pacey Road.

It remains to be seen how these new arrangements will affect MCCG but I am very concerned that the lack of a dedicated Creek Ranger will seriously impact on our Catchment's performance. It is doubtful whether a shared Ranger working between 1 to 3 days a week will provide the creativity and enthusiasm of our full time Rangers.

On a happier note we are all delighted by how well Dale Borgelt has recovered from her operation. Dale's contribution to MCCG has been outstanding for so many years and to see her fit and full of energy is a delight. We all thank Dale who coordinated our as always highly successful Kids' Day – helped by a group of talented contributors and volunteers.

In addition, we must all thank Anna Greig who resigned from BCC as a Creek Ranger last month. Anna's enthusiasm and talents will be sorely missed.

MCCG usually takes part in the National Tree Planting Day sponsored by Planet Ark. This year Kenmore State High School (KSHS) held a National Tree Planting Day on Friday 27th July with 65 students participating. Altogether 841 trees, shrubs and grasses were planted with sponsorship from Toyota Motor Company providing hats, gloves and plants and a Prius vehicle. Brisbane Council also supported the outing by providing half the plants and 50 m<sup>3</sup> of mulch. Coordinating the event were Michael Walker, head of Health and Physical Education KSHS and Damien Egan, MCCG's Section Leader.

*Malcolm Frost*

## Energex Grant gives boost to MCCG work on Deerhurst Park/Gap Creek Wildlife Corridor

Moggill Creek Catchment Group has received a \$10,000 grant from Energex to work on the public and private land on the Deerhurst Rd side of Gap Creek. Terry Effeney, Energex CEO, said "We're very happy to be able to assist the Moggill Creek Catchment Group to improve the health and biodiversity in the Gap Creek wildlife corridor, one of the many worthwhile sustainability initiatives supported through the Energex Sustainability and Environment Fund." The first project to be supported by this Energex grant is a huge working bee on August 26 on private Deerhurst property adjoining the public land.

Gap Creek at Deerhurst Park is in MCCG Section 12 which has Michael Humphreys as Section Leader. With the support of Habitat Brisbane, Michael and his Section team have already cleared weeds and replanted with natives along most of the Kenmore Hills side of the creek. For example, there are now approximately 45 Richmond Butterfly Vines on that side and more on nearby private properties. Approximately 80 to 100 different species of trees and shrubs native to Brookfield or to the lowland rain forests of South East Queensland have been planted. These trees and shrubs have created a canopy in the sections initially planted and are already starting to naturally reproduce. In addition, the rough trail which they have created on the Kenmore Hills side is increasingly used by walkers, cyclists, and horseback riders. Birdwatchers are also coming to the park. Recently a very rough track has been added on the Deerhurst Road side of the creek.

The Energex grant is just the start of a more ambitious project, Mike Humphreys pointed out. We would like to make both the public land and the private land bordered by Deerhurst Road, Brookfield Road, and Gap Creek Road largely weed free. In addition we will revegetate the public land with species native to Brookfield. We will also be encouraging private landowners to plant local species on their properties. From time to time we will be holding working bees on both the public and private land. The result will be a wildlife corridor plus recreational possibilities on 6 hectares of public land. This would be augmented by up to 6 or 8 hectares of adjoining private land largely dedicated to wildlife. In order to achieve this goal we will be applying for additional grants to work on both the public and private land over the next few years.

Mike has said that at this point there are several issues about the development of the park and how the council might help with that development that need to be resolved. Part of the park is a road reserve which is no longer needed now that Gap Creek Road has been upgraded. Is there enough public support to remove this land from the road reserve and transfer it to the parks department? In addition could the Council improve the trail that we have put in and take over its maintenance? We would also like to hear other suggestions about how the park can be improved.

Contact: Michael Humphreys - mh@psy.uq.edu.au Dale Borgelt MCCG PR Officer - daleborgelt@gmail.com

## Kids' Day at the Cottage

Three years in a row the weather has been kind to the last Sunday in May for Kids' Day at the Cottage. In 2012 that allowed nearly 300 little and big people to come and enjoy Kids' Day fun in the wonderful setting of the MCCG Environment Centre, the Cottage on the Gold Creek Dam Reserve at the very end of Gold Creek Road, Brookfield. Also for three years, Kids' Day at the Cottage has benefitted from the help of the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund via the Pullenvale Ward Office. Kids' Day at the Cottage has proved a very popular community event.

The Cottage itself had much to interest adults and kids with its library, displays and insect cabinet. The drawers which displayed the dung beetles found in our recent survey attracted a lot of attention. Also inside the Cottage there was plenty of art and craft activity. Carolyn Parsons had a constant stream of children around her table eager to make beautiful sun-catchers. In another room littlies were happy to colour in pages of native wildlife.

The good weather allowed the other displays and activities to be enjoyed under marquees:

[1] Creek Ranger Stacey Hodge introduced youngsters to the mysteries of what lives in creek water.

[2] Dale's daughter, Deborah Craig, and grand-daughter Rebecca, helped enthusiastic youngsters make jewellery with wonderful hand-made pottery beads and native leaf shapes. (photo p1) These unique clay items were made by Marjorie Welch, so children went home proudly wearing very individual pieces.

[3] The Snail Whisperer was there to share his knowledge of native snails. John Stanic is Australia's leading expert on land snails, but he happily gives his time to come with a display for Kids' Day.

[4] Andrew Wilson helped kids pot up a seedling native plant to take home happy in the knowledge they could help the environment and perhaps a specific native butterfly.

As usual Geckoes Wildlife presentation was a popular highlight, but, given a chance to show some wildlife from outside our own catchment, Martin Fingland produced a trump card right at the end when he carried in Billy the Wombat. Martin is not small, but Billy seemed almost too heavy to carry. Nevertheless, Billy seemed to gaze quite calmly at the excited crowd jostling around him. ( photo p1)

2012 Kids' Day at the Cottage was rated an outstanding success by happy little and big visitors who were especially delighted that all the activities were absolutely free.

*Dale Borgelt*

## Glossy Black-Cockatoos

Visits of the rare Glossy Black-Cockatoos to Western Brisbane suburbs are limited by the presence of the she-oak feed trees since many of these trees have been destroyed in the process of urban development. Glossy Blacks chew the tiny winged seeds from the cones of *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *A. torulosa*, and these chewed cones, or 'orts' form a mat under feed trees. The 'clicking' of beaks as the birds extract the seeds from the cones is often the only sound heard during the day. At the end of the day they drink at a watering spot that could be a dam, a creek or even a birdbath. Hollows in old trees, needed for nesting sites, are also rare in many situations. She-oaks are pioneer species that are useful to plant in a 'difficult' position where the canopy has been broken. Since the cones form only on the female trees it is necessary to plant several trees in a clump. The male trees flower at the end of the branchlets, and the brown pollen often makes the trees look as though they are dying.

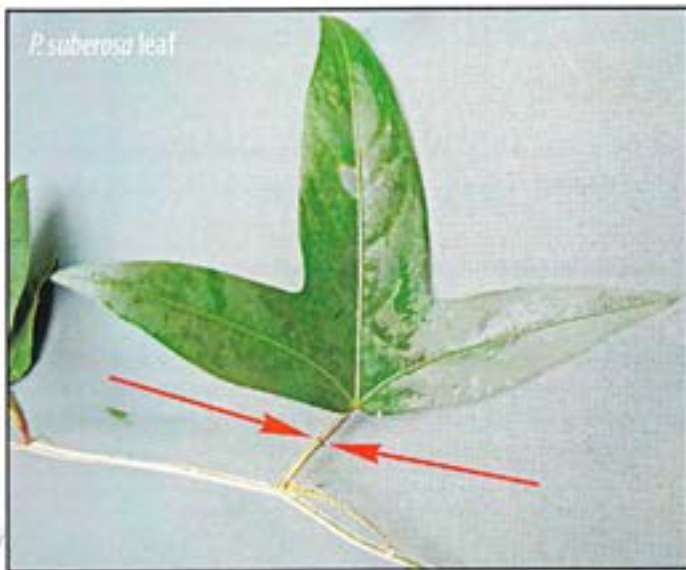
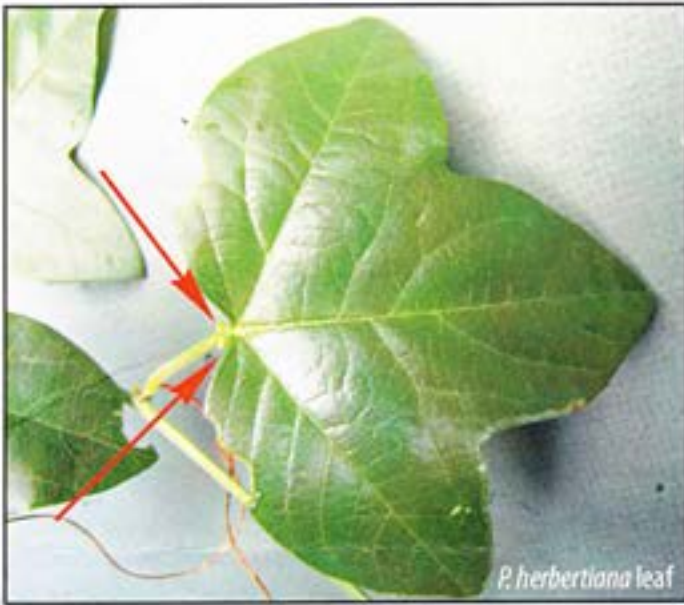
It is rare to see them flying in a flock of more than three (two adults and an immature), unlike the more common yellow-tails who frequently fly around Kenmore and Mt Coot-tha in flocks of ten or more. Glossy Blacks are brownish rather than black, and only mature males of six years or more have red tails. Younger male and female birds have black barring across orange tail panels. Female birds have yellow feathers scattered over their heads, quite unlike the yellow cheek patches of the yellow-tail. (Photo p1)

For more information, go to [www: glossyblack.org.au](http://www.glossyblack.org.au)

A survey day has been planned for October 14. The data collected on this day will supplement isolated sightings recorded throughout the year. Would you please look and listen around your property on this day and report any sightings or hearings to Dawn Beck, Ph 3378 8598 or email [alphabec@powerup.com.au](mailto:alphabec@powerup.com.au) A photograph would be even better.

*Lyn Cole*

*Passiflora* (See A genus which has everything, p. 6)



## A genus which has everything!

The genus *Passiflora* is represented by relatively few species in South-east Queensland, but it includes a delicious fruit, several environmental weed species, one of which is listed by the Council for 'reduction through routine maintenance' and two native species, both of which occur in our Catchment.

The delicious fruit is, of course, the passion fruit and the weeds include the listed corky passion vine *P. suberosa*, and the white passion flower, *P. subpeltata*, both of which are abundant in our Catchment (the fruiting species, *P. edulis*, is also commonly found as a minor weed.). The two native species are *P. herbertiana*, native passion flower, and *P. aurantia*, the red passion flower. Unusually, the native species have much more striking flowers than the common weed species.

The family Passifloraceae includes just 12 genera with about 600 species, about 500 of which are in the predominantly American genus *Passiflora*. Quoting an American website "When Christian missionaries arrived in South America in the 16th century, they found a plant which they felt was a good omen for their mission. They called it the passion flower because to them it symbolized the death of Christ. The five sepals and five petals of the flower, which are similar in appearance, represent the disciples without Peter and Judas. The double row of colored filaments, known as the corona, signifies the halo around Christ's head or the crown of thorns. The five stamens and the three spreading styles with their flattened heads symbolize the wounds and the nails respectively. The vines tendrils resemble the whips used to scourge Christ." (The photo of *P. herbertiana* on p.5 shows these features.)

Four of the six species found in our Catchment are pictured on page 5. All are climbers with axillary tendrils, and all commonly (although not invariably) have 3-lobed leaves. Flowers are complex, quite large except in *P. suberosa*, in which they are <2 cm in diameter (see photograph; note 1mm divisions on rule), and this species also has quite small fruit. Flower and fruit sizes are compared below; also in the table are data for stipule length, the stipule being the leafy structure found in many species at the base of the petiole, or leaf stalk:

Species	Flower diameter	Fruit length	Stipule length	Weed?
<i>P. aurantia</i>	8-10 cm	c. 3-4 cm	c. 1 mm	Native
<i>P. edulis</i>	c.6 cm	c. 7 cm	10-13 mm	(Weed)
<i>P. foetida</i>	3-5 cm	c. 2-3 cm	5-10 mm	Weed
<i>P. herbertiana</i>	c. 6 cm	4-7 cm	1-3 mm	Native
<i>P. suberosa</i>	1-2 cm	0.8-1.5 cm	5-8 mm	Weed
<i>P. subpeltata</i>	4-5.5 cm	1.5-2 cm	15-40 mm	Weed

When not in flower or fruit, *P. suberosa* and *P. herbertiana* can be quite difficult to distinguish, particularly as they both have very variable leaf shape. One way is to check on the positions of the tiny glands on the margins of the petiole. In *P. herbertiana* they are close to the leaf blade, whereas in *P. suberosa* they are much lower down the petiole (see arrows in leaf photographs). I am grateful to Ross Patterson for showing me this distinguishing character.

The weed species *P. subpeltata* may readily be distinguished from another weed, *P. foetida*, by its longer stipules.

Bryan Hacker

## More Birdwing Vines in catchment

Recently, seven US university students planted 100 Birdwing vines (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*) on four properties in the catchment as part of a partnership between the Richmond Birdwing Conservation Network (RBCN) and Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA). (photo p 5) As part of the planting lots of lantana and small weed herbs were removed.

The keys to successfully growing Birdwing vines on infertile soils is the addition of 10% dolomite in the backfill soil and not damaging the delicate roots of the vines during planting.

Also, one needs to plant two-year old vines that can withstand the new conditions and allow the delicate roots to adjust.

These Birdwing vines complement the many already being grown in the catchment by keen landowners.

More information: [www.richmondbirdwing.org.au](http://www.richmondbirdwing.org.au)

Greg Siepen

## Earthworks along boundaries can degrade forests.

A recent case of development on the boundary between two properties highlighted one of the forms of degradation that tends not to be recognised or discussed, but has the potential to be very detrimental to a forest. The case arose from preparation of a building site very close to the boundary of land with mature trees and shrubs of a regenerated forest some 50 years old.

Within a metre of the tree line, a near vertical face was cut to a depth ranging from 2.5 metres to about 400cm. In the exposed face many large and small roots were cut through; some were 50 to 100 mm diameter, exploiting the soil in the neighbour's land which had for more than 30 years been a lightly grazed or slashed pasture. The bank face extends for approximately 30 metres.

The site is at the crest of a broad low hill which is underlain by metamorphosed sediments with some interbedded volcanics runoff from this crest, so the forest is dependent on the soil moisture and nutrients underneath it, and previously (before excavation) under the pasture in the neighbour's land, now covered with fill. The soils vary from shallow (approx. 30-40cm) to moderately deep (approx. 60cm) where the parent material has been partially weathered.

With a steep bank, repeated wetting and drying can lead to instability and erosion, while extended wet periods may cause slumping. The root damage results in major changes to the hydraulic and hydrologic properties of the land along the edge of the earthworks, the soil behind the face drying out progressively over dry periods resulting in reduced available soil water for plant growth and some plant death. This latter will increase soil instability. Not only is available water reduced but so too are mineral nutrients.

This sort of vegetation destruction can be considered every bit as serious as clearing of vegetation in areas covered by Conservation Agreements and Vegetation Protection Orders.

*Adrian Webb*

## Vegetative propagation

Our central activity is getting a maximum number of native plant species on the ground. We do this by propagating them in our nursery, from seeds we collect. Such is not however entirely satisfactory, because we get no seed of many species or if we do, they may be insufficient in number or don't germinate well or uniformly. We have therefore decided to produce these from cuttings which is not difficult if we provide a suitable environment. We are at present constructing a small (about 10m<sup>2</sup>) stand-alone shadehouse with heated benches, misters and an extractor fan to avoid overheating of the space in hot weather.

This has been hard work for a number of our members because we have had to cut in to a slope for a horizontal base. In fact, it was getting beyond us, but fortunately John Rietkerk of Jones Rd came along with his earthmoving equipment and did what would have taken several men many days to do. And at no cost!

*Graeme Wilson*

## Creek Health Monitoring – Join the happy group!

On June 17 the dedicated teams of the Creek Health Monitoring Program set about the first of our 2012 creek samplings across the 12 sites in the Moggill Creek catchment. The weather was great. We had postponed sampling some weeks earlier because of persistent wet weather and continued fresh flows down the creeks.

Dr Tim Howell gave an informal report to the Friends Of Moggill Creek gathering on 4 August, and led a lively discussion about the results. He emphasised that our program is focussed on gaining a baseline understanding of the health of our creeks and is one of the few that are being conducted by community groups.

Despite the slightly cooler weather than the first sampling last year, the number and variety of fish species caught (and released) indicated that the fish population is in good condition. For the first time, Smelt was caught at a couple of sites, which excited some of the fishos in our teams.

The numbers of macroinvertebrates and fish were down on the November sampling and that was expected because of the seasonal conditions. However, Gap Creek and Mackay Brook were quite low in numbers of macroinvertebrates and fish. Water quality of Mackay Brook site was poor with salt content being more than double the content of the other sites. This is consistent with the previous sampling results.

We are keen to have more people join our 6 teams; it helps to get the job done and also assists us to have some depth in numbers for the odd times when others cannot participate. It has been great to see how much enjoyment most people are getting as they become more confident in the various data collections. We have opportunities for team members to get training in water monitoring through workshops run by SEQ Catchments. **Please contact Adrian Webb ([adrian@webbnet.com.au](mailto:adrian@webbnet.com.au)) if you are interested.**

*Adrian Webb*

## Disposal of weed waste

We all have to deal with weeds. Having pulled them out or cut them down and treated the stumps, what should we do with the material? (This article is not concerned with herbicide application to standing material, something which we regard as undesirable except as a last resort.)

There may be, in some situations, a reason for removing the material from the site. As a general rule however, it should be kept there. The decaying material releases the mineral nutrients which it had taken up from the soil, maintaining that aspect of fertility. It also contributes to desirable soil structure. Moreover, and especially so on sloping sites, it reduces water and surface soil runoff. Meanwhile, very small patches are created, favourable to the germination of seeds falling there and subsequent growth. (Most of us depend on some natural regeneration by native species.)

We don't like burning, for the reason above, while hot fires can damage soil fertility. It does destroy seeds or vegetative material which can give regrowth. If the weed has a fairly distinct seeding period, remove it before it seeds. If it occurs in a limited area, you can allow seed germination and destroy seedlings when they appear. Troublesome vegetative material (e.g. madiara vine tubers and purple succulent stolons) is easily gathered in to neat heaps and covered with black plastic sheeting. It will die in due course.

Is mulching an option? It is unlikely to avoid the consequences raised above; but if the mulch is to be moved elsewhere, avoid doing so if it contains the seeds or vegetative material referred to.

*Graeme Wilson*

## New weed to our area found in upper Gold Creek Catchment

A recent infestation of Glowvine or Purple Bignonia (*Saritaea magnifica*) on a private property very close to Gold Creek Reservoir was found earlier this year. The identification of this vine was confirmed by the herbarium as a potentially invasive weed that is in the same family as Cat's Claw Creeper. It is quite a common garden plant but it has only been confirmed as an escapee in bushland in a few places along the Brisbane River in inner Brisbane. There have been no previously known recordings within bushland around the Moggill Creek Catchment. On close inspection it is very similar to the recently recorded Monkeys Comb with tendrils and a similar leaf shape but its purple coloured flowers clearly separate the two. (Photo p1)

As this plant is not commonly found in bushland throughout SEQ little is known about its growing tendencies. On this particular site it had not flowered or spread over a huge area like its cousin Cat's Claw Creeper can, but was quite rampant in a 10x10m area, twining itself within the canopy of surrounding Acacias and smothering them.

Once identified the infestation was very quickly treated by cutting and swabbing the stems with 50/50 Glyphosate. All parts of the plant were taken to the dump just in case they grew if left on the ground. Recent inspections 3 months after the treatment resulted in finding the entire vine controlled with no regrowth so far.

*Cory Hochen*

## Third - Thursday Talk at the Cottage on 18th October at 10am: A Weed Removal and Revegetation Project

Finalists in the 2012 Healthy Waterways Awards, Sue and Scott Reilly, are giving a presentation on their weed removal and revegetation project on Yarraman Creek. Sue and Scott have lived on the Yarraman Creek since 02/2005 and are working upstream of their property in Endangered Vegetation Area 12.3.7. This project of weed removal and revegetation earned them recognition in the recent Healthy Waterways Awards.

Yarraman may be a long way from Brookfield, but weed removal and revegetation projects complicated by flooding creeks give us plenty in common and plenty to learn from. We look forward to hearing about their experiences on THURSDAY 18th OCTOBER 10am-Noon THE COTTAGE MCCG Environment Centre on Gold Creek Dam Reserve.

If you are able to come please contact [daleborgelt@gmail.com](mailto:daleborgelt@gmail.com) or ph 3374 1035

## Third - Thursday Talk at the Cottage on 15th November at 10am: Keeping Native Stingless Bees

Tony Goodrich will be sharing knowledge he has gained in the 25 years he has been interested in our native stingless bees. He will be able to show you a working hive where these tiny creatures produce their own special "sugarbag" honey. Tony will actually demonstrate splitting a hive which is how they are propagated. If you can come to the Cottage on Thursday 15th November book your place with [daleborgelt@gmail.com](mailto:daleborgelt@gmail.com)

*Dale Borgelt*