



MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

www.moggillcreek.org.au

MCCG NEWSLETTER: Spring 2020

Your Spring 2020 issue (with a distinctive 'birding' flavour) includes: *Bush Bite* (p4-5), Chairman's Report (p2), *Froggin' Around* (p5-6), Getting to Know You (pp 4 & 7), Moggill Magic (p8), Nursery Numbers (p7), Photo Comp Reminder (p6), Seeds & Weeds (pp 5 & 6), Threatened Species Feature (p3).



ABOVE (L): For more about the Rose-crowned Fruit-dove, and other colourful catchment birds also photographed by Ed Frazer, turn to page 4.

ABOVE (R): What was Andrew Wilson 'up' to at the Nursery (image Bryan Hacker)? More on page 2.

LEFT: Jim Pope (centre, green shirt), with fellow volunteers who worked on the 'Bush Tucker Garden' restoration (picture credit: Tracey Read). For more, turn to Jim Pope's article on page 6.



ABOVE: Before and after images from the 'Bush Tucker Garden' restoration (pictures credit: Tracey Read). Turn to p6 for more.

Chairman's report

Like everyone else, Covid-19 continues to disrupt our plans and pose new challenges for Moggill Creek Catchment Group. Fortunately, after several postponements, we were finally able to hold a meeting in Brookfield Hall on the evening of 30th July, when Prof. Jennifer Firth from QUT gave us a very interesting talk entitled 'A tale of two non-native grasses.' However, new restrictions have prevented us staging further face-to-face talks for the foreseeable future, so we are planning to try the experiment of holding a public meeting via Zoom. Prof. Paul Roe (also from QUT) has agreed to give us a presentation on the latest advances in acoustic monitoring of the environment entitled 'The Australian Acoustic Observatory,' probably on the evening of Thursday 1st October. This should be a fascinating talk, so stand by for further details.

Brisbane Catchments Network (BCN) is supporting an initiative called 'Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count', which will involve families and school groups counting butterflies throughout the greater Brisbane area, at three times during the coming months. It is being coordinated by Jutta Godwin from the Cubberla-Witton Catchments Network (CWCN). If you or your kids would like to be involved, contact Jutta at: butterfly@brisbanecatchments.org.au

Meanwhile, we are still planning to go ahead with our annual platypus survey, on the (very early) morning of Sunday 13th September (albeit with restricted numbers this year), and with our Photographic Competition (entries due Saturday 17th October), so everyone should try to get out in our wonderful environment with cameras at the ready! *Jim Pope*

Editorial

Thanks for the great contributions this issue. Remember that new authors are ALWAYS welcome. **The absolute deadline for the next issue is 20 November 2020.** I am sure EVERYONE has at least 100 words they could [email to me](#).... Get writing **now**. Don't wait until the deadline! *Cathi*

PS: Bird Identification

Did you correctly identify the colourful male Regent Bowerbird in Tim Spencer's picture on page 8? Ed Frazer advises that Regent Bowerbirds are rarely seen in our area, but Carolyn and Tim Spencer have been fortunate to have them visiting their water bowl feature in their Savages Road garden for many years.

Moggill Creek Catchment Group (MCCG) is a volunteer action group, aiming to conserve & improve the natural environment of our catchment on both private & public land.

Chairman: Jim Pope

Secretary: Kathleen Walmsley

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore 4069 mccgsecretary@live.com.au

Any printing of this quarterly Newsletter is on recycled paper (*printing* by The Print Shoppe, Kenmore). 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 photographer and of the MCCG.

Articles of interest to Members are *always* welcome.

The Editor reserves the right not to publish any item submitted. Material will be edited for clarity, style, and space. The decision of the Editor is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. ***Please email your ideas direct:***

Newsletter Editor: Dr Catherine A. Lawrence (Cathi)

MCCG is Proudly Supported by



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Nursery News

No matter how careful we are rats have been digging up, and devouring, sown seed at the Nursery. But we are now planning to enlist some help. Nursery visitors may recently have noticed something new. Thanks to a suggestion by Joan Wilkinson, one of our volunteers, and following a grant from the Lord Mayors Community Sustainability and Environmental Grants Program, we have purchased a Barn Owl nest box from Hollow Log Homes. My front cover photo shows Andrew Wilson (supported by Damien Egan, not-pictured) attaching the nest box to a nearby tree. The box is now ready for a barn owl, which should solve some of our problems. *Bryan Hacker*

KEEPING IN TOUCH: Meeting and event dates are understandably subject to change, so why not 'like' our Facebook page to ensure you always have the latest updates?

What ARE Threatened Species?

As promised in our last issue, this is the first of a regular series from Dr Manda Page.

When introducing myself in the last issue of the newsletter, I referred to my work for the Queensland Government in the protection and recovery of threatened species. This first *feature* looks at some terminology, and our work—starting with a reminder about what a threatened species *is*.

A threatened species is one that is at risk of extinction; basically, a species that is in real trouble.

The Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992 is our overarching conservation legislation in Queensland. It provides us with the ability to legally declare a species as being threatened, and to assign species to a conservation class (such as Extinct, Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Near Threatened). There is a formal process to get a species listed, as each must meet international criteria set by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN; <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>). This can be challenging. The process is necessarily based on scientific information, but rare species are often difficult to study—which means that we often don't have sufficient scientific information *and* we have an ongoing challenge to meet this information shortfall. In Australia, we also have national legislation that provides for threatened species (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999). We are working towards having the various lists align—as it is confusing where states and territories have different lists (both individually and in comparison with the Commonwealth)—but solving this challenge will take some time.

More important than the legalities, there are many **practical** implications of a species being listed as

threatened. Firstly, there are greater penalties and protections for a species if it is listed as threatened. Secondly, having a list helps to inform how we should spend valuable conservation resources. Thirdly, as there are a number of government agencies, non-government organisations, First Nations People, community groups and industry that all contribute to conservation; knowing which species are at most risk helps us all make valuable contributions.

Worldwide there are over 30,000 species threatened with extinction. Unfortunately, there are currently 1,000 species listed as threatened in Queensland (the list was updated on 22nd August, when the number of threatened species increased from 961 to 1,000—see *table, below*).

Stay tuned to learn more about some of our locally threatened species, their biggest threats and what you can do to help. More information about threatened species in Queensland is available online at

<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/wildlife/threatened-species>

Dr Manda Page

August Tree Planting

The Huntington/Tuckett bushcare group looks after a section of the 'riparian zone' of Moggill Creek that extends from the footbridge at the bottom of Branton St. Kenmore Hills through the parklands to Rafting Ground Rd. The group has been operating for about 20 years, and during that time has planted most of the trees that can be seen in the area. On the morning of Sunday 23rd August, we planted another 420 native trees and shrubs in two locations (both previously occupied mainly by weeds).

One of our regular working bee members, Baheret Sabet (*pictured, wearing the straw hat, in Jim Pope's picture, overleaf*), had asked us to organise a special tree planting to commemorate the centenary of the arrival

Endangered Species in Queensland

	Extinct	Extinct in the wild	Critically Endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable	Totals
Amphibians	0	3	10	7	16	36
Birds	0	1	5	24	35	65
Fish & Shellfish	0	0	2	8	6	16
Mammals	2	6	0	18	28	54
Reptiles	0	0	6	10	35	51
Insects	0	0	1	2	5	8
Flora	0	19	74	210	467	770
Total	2	29	98	279	592	1000

Source: <https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/wildlife/threatened-species>, August 2020

in Australia of the Bahá'í community, of which she is a member. We had planned to host around 20 of their local youth group at the planting, but at the last minute this had to be curtailed due to an announcement from the Queensland Premier the previous day that stricter Covid-19 restrictions were being implemented. However, with some rather frantic last-minute reorganisation, we were able to proceed with the planting, albeit with a reduced participation to comply with the new restrictions. A new member of the bushcare group, Julian Tuckett, who attended the working bee with his daughter



Martina, has a historical connection to the area. They recently moved to Brisbane from north Queensland. Julian's great grandfather, who gave his name to Tuckett St., was the owner of the dairy farm that used to occupy much of the area where the bushcare group now operates. Julian and Martina are now helping us to return at least some of the land to the native forest that dominated the area prior to logging and land clearing in the 19th and early 20th centuries. *Jim Pope*

New Member News

Always lovely to welcome new members to the Catchment Group. Don't forget, this is a Member Newsletter; all articles (and 'new voices') are very welcome.

I'm delighted to be one of the MCCG's newer members, particularly as I spend much of my time combining my love for the environment with my passion for creating artworks.

I've been involved with our local environment for some time, including when my children were attending The Gap Hilder Road State School. Fish Creek forms the border of the school with council land, and a good friend (and horticulturist) explained the importance of caring for our waterways. We started with a goal to restore the habitat, and were fortunate to secure a grant. To increase impact, we used this opportunity as the springboard to develop

an environmental education program for the primary school (via www.fishcreek4061.com.au). Over time, the education program and its reach continued to grow. Even though my children left the school some years ago, the program is still running, which is great.

I now work as an artist, specialising in creating



uplifting artworks that incorporate science and symbolism. I'm really excited to have recently received a Queensland Arts stART grant to create two special series of art cards. The 'Remember When Art Cards' project

will be a series of seven Australian birds and a series of seven Art Nouveau inspired femmes with Australian flora. More of my artwork is at

www.instagram.com/kirstie.page.art and www.facebook.com/kirstiepageart). *Kirstie Page*

Bush Bites: A Colourful Trio

Don't forget that more *Bush Bites* are always welcome—for the newsletter and for the MCCG website.

We have three spectacularly coloured birds in our catchment that have similarly beautiful colours, but very different lifestyles: the Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove, the Noisy Pitta and the Rainbow Bee-eater.

The Rose-crowned Fruit-dove (*see picture, front cover*) visits from the end of September and leaves around Easter each year to move to warmer areas up the coast of Queensland

(although I have experienced one overwintering in Brookfield).

While here, they breed in a nest that is no more than a few sticks in the fork of a tree, five metres or more off the ground, and lay just one egg. Their diet is mainly native fruit,



preferring small purple/black fruit which they swallow whole, but they will also take small figs and Lillipillies. Despite their brilliant colours they can be well-camouflaged, and they crawl through the branches of the trees in which they are feeding. They

are surprisingly abundant in the catchment and have two quite distinctive calls that give their presence away. I am sure they are prey of some raptors such as Sparrowhawks and Goshawks and unfortunately, they are frequent victims of our window strikes.

The Noisy Pittas (*pictured page 4, credit Ed Frazer*) don't live up to their name in our catchment, as they seldom call during the winter months when they are here. In the summer, they breed in places such as the Toowoomba Range and Bunya Mountains (which is where they call incessantly, while raising their young). The Noisy Pitta is associated with dense leaf litter, where they forage for insects and worms. They are a very wary bird, as they have to be on the lookout for



danger (locally, mainly from domestic cats).

The Rainbow Bee-eater (*left, in Ed Frazer's photo*) is the only one of the trio that frequents the Catchment all-year-round. In the 1970s and 80s they

were common around our paddocks, and often lined up along the fences when making darting sorties to catch the bees that make up the main portion of their diet. By 2000 they were seldom seen or heard, so I encouraged my family to keep beehives. Now we see them frequently, and have a plentiful supply of honey! Rainbow Bee-eaters breed communally, in tunnels made in the sandy banks of the Brisbane River. They are often heard before they are seen, and they make an attractive rolling 'drrrrr' sound, as they gracefully dart around catching bees. They are said to eat other insects such as wasps and dragonflies, but I only see them eating bees. I am not aware of any serious dangers to the species, and they are widely spread around the Australian coast.

Ed Frazer

Weeds: Leucaena

Leucaena (*Leucaena leucocephala*) is a shrub or small tree which is a significant weed in native ecosystems, but is also a valued pasture legume in parts of Queensland, owing to its high-quality foliage and persistence under grazing/browsing. Some 200,000ha have been established for grazing, mostly in central Queensland. Leucaena was introduced as a shade tree about a century ago, but it was not until a CSIRO scientist developed a technique for overcoming a toxicity problem in the 1960s-70s that it was developed

as a pasture plant, and several cultivars have since been released.

Leucaena mostly grows to a height of 10m, and plants are well-branched. Leaves are up to 35cm long and are bipinnate, the leaflets 7-21mm long. Flowers are in pompom-like heads 12-30mm across and are cream coloured. The pods are up to 22cm long and 2cm wide, each containing 10-25 seeds. Leucaena seeds prolifically (*see photo, below*) and, according to some reports, seeds can remain viable for 20 years.



Locally, Leucaena is a significant weed that can form dense stands. It is critically important to prevent it from seeding, and to collect any seeds for disposal, before removing the plant (using the cut-stump method and glyphosate). *Bryan Hacker*

Platypus Survey

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, this year's [Platypus survey](#) on 13th September will be a scaled-down version (with no post-survey breakfast unfortunately!), but it will still go ahead. All the key platypus sites will be monitored. Thanks again to Dr Christine Hosking and her fellow volunteers. We hope to have a report on the survey results in the next issue.

Froggin' Around: Observe Our Frogs

The most famous of weather-predicting animals is Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog, who on the 2nd February 2020, saw no shadows and predicted an early spring (but he only got it right 4 out of the past 13 years). For me, frogs are a great predictor; frog calling means it will rain within 24 hours.

What are the factors that influence frog calling, and why so often in groups? A quick search through the literature shows *season* and *weather* affect the chorus behaviour of frogs. A new moon may be favoured (reducing the success of predators), but rainfall, temperature and humidity might be more important. There are several advantages of choruses (when males

aggregate to attract mates) over individual calling: sharing the energy use of making the call, attracting greater numbers of females to successful breeding sites, and protecting individual callers from predators (the “dilution effect”).

Eastern sedge frog are now calling from the dam and canopy (they breed in permanent water), while green tree frogs (temporary-water breeders) gather on the ground around ponding water to call from drainpipes or rock crevices at the onset of rain, often breeding in same sites for the whole season or for years. Recently over 100 striped marsh frogs were heard calling from the water, in a drain-line pool at Bowman Park (Bardon), following a storm the night before. During the following days only the occasional frog was heard calling (they must all be sitting back with cigarettes!). As these frogs need permanent water for 4-6 months for the metamorphs to emerge from the water, I’m looking forward to La Niña. *Phil Bird*

Seeds: Can you help?

Have you thought of collecting seeds of local native trees, shrubs, or groundcover for our Nursery? We are always happy to receive them. Make sure the fruit is ripe before collecting. If you are unsure of the species, collect a twig with some leaves as well (or take a close-up photo and email to jbhacker@powerup.com.au). Drop off seeds (leaves and twigs) at 41 Gap Creek Road, or leave them in our letterbox, with your name and where collected. Thank you! *Bryan Hacker*

Bush Tucker Garden Restoration

In 2006, the MCCG received a grant from Australia’s Open Garden Scheme to establish a ‘Bush Tucker’ Garden behind the Brookfield Produce Store at the end of Rafting Ground Road. With the permission of the then owners of the store, two 20,000 litre water tanks were installed at the back of the store to provide water, both for the garden and for MCCGs bushcare groups. The idea of the ‘Bush Tucker’ Garden was to provide an opportunity for MCCG members, and local residents, to become familiar with a range of plant species that were used to provide food for the traditional Aboriginal Owners of the land. Unfortunately, in recent years, due to lack of maintenance, the garden had become overgrown with exotic vines such as glycine, Madeira vine and balloon vine, as well as other weeds.

Having learned only recently of the existence of this ‘Bush Tucker’ Garden, I decided to organise a special working bee, to start to clear out the weeds and clean

up the site. On Sunday 9th August, a group of 22 volunteers gathered at the site (with appropriate ‘social distancing’), to start the work. About half the group were young people from a local Baha’i youth group—the ‘Brookfield Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Program (Brookfield JYSEP)’—who, despite little previous experience of bushcare work, proved of great assistance. The area is now largely clear of weeds (*pictures, front cover*), but it will require ongoing support to replace species that had been smothered by the weeds and to maintain it as weed-free. With the agreement of the current management of the Brookfield Produce Store, it is hoped to restore it to its former glory and to encourage local residents and school groups etc. to visit the area and learn more about foodstuffs that the first Australians included in their diet. If anyone would like to volunteer to assist with the upkeep of the ‘Bush Tucker’ Garden please contact me (j.pope@qut.edu.au). We need 3-4 people at the site for 2-3 hours once a month, to re-plant the missing species and keep the area well maintained. No previous experience is necessary and tools etc. will be provided. *Jim Pope*

Not Long Now!!

It’s getting closer!! The annual MCCG Photography Competition is again being held this October, and we would LOVE to receive your entries. Details, terms and conditions, and entry forms, can be found at our [website](#). For the first time, we will now accept photos taken in both Brisbane and Ipswich Catchments. Been pelican watching at Colleges Crossing? Spotted any raptors at Mt Crosby Weir? Photos from these, and neighbouring Ipswich areas, can be entered this year. Please encourage your family, friends, and workmates to enter; we love showcasing our local photographic talent and the amazing local fauna and flora.

Key Dates: Submission of open entries on **17th October** (Digital Young Persons entries can be submitted online from **28th Sept to 16th Oct**), Kenmore Village Shopping Centre Exhibition: **Mon 19th o Sat 24th Oct** (prizes presented at **2 pm, Saturday 24th Oct**).

WITH THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL LOCAL SPONSORS:



Dr Christian Rowan MP



Thanks again to my fellow ‘photo comp’ committee members, and to our wonderful sponsors. We couldn’t do this without their support. *Rebecca Bain*

Nursery Numbers (2019-20)

Data collection and analysis is a vital task for the MCCG, supporting essential grant applications and reporting. Fortunately, Bruce Siemon is responsible for this important role.

During 2019-20, the MCCG nursery distributed 15,198 plants (*see table, below*). These plants were provided free to MCCG members as well as to Pullen Pullen Catchment Group members, in recognition of the support of several PPCG members at nursery working bees. Frequently members visit the nursery repeatedly in their work on restoring native vegetation and often report their success with earlier plantings of MCCG-grown plants. Some plants were also sold by MCCG volunteers at public events. Limited numbers of advanced plants of the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vines continued to be sold for \$8 each.

Distribution of MCCG Nursery Plants, 2019-20

MCCG Section	Destination/Section Name	Plants
1	Pullenvale Rd Moons Lane	218
2	Lower Moggill	375
3	Huntington	612
4	Showgrounds	806
5	Haven Rd	34
6	Upper Brookfield	3,306
7	Gold Creek Reserve	35
8	Wonga Creek	993
9	Upper Gold Creek	252
10	Lower Gold Creek	225
11	McKay Brook	634
12	Gap Creek	1,066
13	Mt Coot-tha	0
n/a	Pullen Pullen Catchments	3,811
n/a	Cubberla Witton Catchments	835
n/a	Unknown destinations	1,996
	TOTAL	15,198

Volunteers at the nursery contributed 1,077 hours during the year, working on the first and third Monday mornings of each month, but this figure does not include additional hours provided by Andrew Wilson and Bryan Hacker. For the first nine months of the financial year (before Covid-19 restrictions were implemented), an average of 17 volunteers attended each working bee. There were 111 different varieties of plants potted during 2019-20. Bryan Hacker continued to be the main point of contact for nursery plants, often servicing individual customer requests several

times every week. During the year, nursery plants were destined for 382 different locations.

Seeds of 117 different species of plants were collected by 24 members for germination at the nursery.

Vegetative propagation of certain species difficult to propagate by other means continued. Seed collection is clearly a limiting factor to nursery activities.

Bruce Siemon

Getting to Know You

Welcome to Tracey, our new Website Coordinator, who has provided this brief personal introduction. Thanks for stepping up to take on the role, Tracey.

Tracey Read relocated back to Brisbane over two and a half years ago, after twenty years living abroad. She currently resides in Pullenvale with her husband (Jeff), two teenage children (Finn and Eve), and their rescue dog (Jersey). She is loving the peace, tranquillity, wildlife, and bushland that surrounds their old Queenslander home, which is in direct contrast to the concrete flats of the last 13 years in Hong Kong.

Tracey is enjoying the never-ending weeding that comes with owning a bush block, and learning about the myriad native plants, which is how she became involved with the MCCG. Having the privilege of procuring hundreds of plants from the MCCG nursery, she wanted to become more involved and the website management seemed like a good fit.

When not in the garden, Tracey still works for the Hong Kong-based charity *Plastic Free Seas* she cofounded in 2012. Much of her time recently was spent on the relaunch of the website for the charity, www.plasticfreeseas.org, which enabled her to build her skills in WordPress and website development and management.

For Tracey, it is a real honor to be able to manage the MCCG website which has an incredible depth of information on our local fauna and flora. She is grateful to have the support and guidance of the team and is looking forward to meeting more of the MCCG community and the incredible contributors from whom she has so much to learn.



Moggill Magic: Jim Butler

Many of our members will be avid followers of Jim Butler's *Local Bulletin* 'Feather Fascination' articles. Thanks to Ed Frazer's latest feature, we learn more about the man with the binoculars.

Jim Butler has been a birder since he was a New South Wales schoolboy, and his passion for birds is still as strong. Jim has put a huge amount of time into checking out the birds in our Catchment—including an enormous amount of work researching and cataloguing their presence and behaviour.

Jim started a 5-year MCCG Bird Project in 2012, and has researched all the birds presently in the catchment and also the species recorded in past years. Together with his friend Ian Muirhead, Jim collaborated with QUT in a sound recording project for the identification of the catchment birds, and they also identified the birds in Deerhurst Park restoration project run by Michael Humphries. Jim's biggest project was developing the *MCCG Bird Guide*, where the 200+ birds present in the catchment are illustrated and their habits are described. Michelle Johnston advises that the [Catchment Bird Guide](#) is the most frequently accessed page of the MCCG website.

Jim (pictured right, picture credit Ed Frazer) is also well-known for his monthly "Feather Fascination" and Bird Identification Quiz, that feature in *The Local Bulletin* and on the MCCG website [media centre](#).

Jim regularly goes birding in the Catchment, and his favourite walks include the Brisbane Forest Park at Gap Creek Road, Deerhurst Park, and the Gold Creek Dam. Jim has described his walks at Deerhurst Park and Gold Creek dam in the MCCG's [Bush Bites](#), providing an excellent guide to which birds can be found (and where). In addition, he has checked out the birds on many private properties in the Catchment—including assisting me in documenting a remarkable 171 bird species on our property.

Jim's favourite bird is the Bush Stone-curlew, as "I have flushed them in the bush, watched them in Kenmore Village carpark and witnessed their breeding on a lawn in Kenmore suburbs." When it comes to most memorable experiences, Jim recalled the tiny Owlet Nightjar and impressive Powerful Owl. He wrote a *Bush Bites* story about the "Triangulation" of a Powerful Owl, where he and Ian Muirhead measured the angles where the sound of the owl came from, and then went to the intersection to find it. The Owlet Nightjar was in a hole at Tina and Kees Heybroek's property in Upper Brookfield. This is a rarely seen small insect eater that feeds at night and

lives in holes during the day. Jim was fortunate to see it peering out from a hole, with its huge eyes squinting in the daylight. "I saw the bird so beautifully, and then I had to learn all about the bird," Jim said. "I was astounded at the way it was both so prevalent, and so invisible."



"Birds have made a huge contribution to my life—both the beauty and wonder of who they are in themselves, and the habitats I visit in order to see them. They live in beautiful settings. Birds in their natural habitat are a totally enriching package," Jim enthused.

Jim has spoken to community groups about the effect of climate change on bird distribution. "There is abundant public data showing the centroids of the distribution of many bird species are drifting south in Australia as the features of habitats move with climate change. The birds north of us are definitely moving south and will appear in the Catchment."

Ed Frazer



PS: Have you seen this bird in the MCCG area?

Turn to p2 for more about this bird, pictured left, and where it was spotted in our catchment (picture credit: Tim Spencer).