



MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

MCCG NEWSLETTER Winter 2022



ABOVE: One of Ed Frazer's wonderful images, illustrating the latest Bush Bite. Turn to page 5 for more about where young Water Dragons like to rest.

LEFT: What did **YOU** see at the 2022 Kids' Day? This wonderful image is from the 2021 event. Send the Editor your 2022 pictures and stories by 1 September to be included in our next Newsletter (Image credit: Chris Bruton).

BELOW: In this issue, Bryan Hacker's popular Seeds and Weeds features are about Tulipwood and the so-called black-eyed Susan weed (Bryan's image below). Turn to pages 6-7 for more



Your latest issue includes: *Bush Bite* (p5), *Chairman's Report* (p2), *Creek Health Monitoring Project* (p7), *Froggin' Around* (p6), *Mare's Eggs* (p4), *Membership Reminder* (p3), *Moggill Magic* (p8), *New Bushcare Support* (p3), *MCCG Photography Competition Reminder* (p6), *Red Triangle Slug* (p4), *Seeds & Weeds* (p6-7), *Tree Trimming* (p7), *What is the (Penda) answer?* (p3-4).

Chairman's Report

The 2022 Brookfield Show provided opportunities to meet with local people, and to commiserate on the continuing rain (and flooding) that occurred in the catchment. While the wet did mean fewer people interacting with our MCCG stall, it also meant that these could be engaged with conversation in detail. Happily, this resulted in several new members signing up—including members who have previously completed works on weed control and stream bank plantings on their own Brookfield properties.

Once again thanks to Dale Borgelt for being such a stalwart of the MCCG display at the Brookfield Show for so many years, together with all members who stepped up for the stall (*see picture, below*).



Plantings not subject to flooding have done well, with nearly three months of rain to set them up for growth to last many years. Weeds have been vigorous, and some species have certainly increased in area over this time. MCCG members have however, used the prevailing conditions to their advantage. For example, Lantana is readily removed in such wet conditions by just pulling the whole plant out (it has a very shallow root system), being cleanly uprooted in sodden soils. Also doing well are the plants in our nursery—they have never been so well-watered! MCCG members should avail themselves of these impressively lush native plants if they have sites ready.

It seems that the environment has returned as an important talking point thanks to the recent Federal election, and this social trend is to be embraced. I think all of us in the MCCG support this rediscovery, while remaining true to our long-held charter of being apolitical and unaligned with any political party or movement. We warmly welcome anyone wanting to help improve the natural condition of our catchment, regardless of political affiliation or social grouping. We look forward to hearing how much you enjoyed the Kids' Day at the Cottage (held at Gold Creek

Reservoir on 12th June). Always a great day, and wonderful to enjoy the sunshine.

We would sincerely like to thank the Brisbane City Council for ongoing funding for our catchment.

Stay dry, this wet spell will lead to taller trees and clearer creeks soon.

Sandy Pollock

Editorial

The MCCG Newsletter is only as good as the articles submitted by our Members and supporters. Which includes YOU!

Thanks to all of our contributors who have made this latest issue so interesting. There is always room for articles and pictures from new writers and photographers (of any age). So please do think about what you'd like to see in a future issue, or share your story about revegetation, walking in the local area, or what a great time you had at the recent Kids' Day.

The absolute deadline for the next issue is 1 September 2022. Start now! Don't wait until the deadline to **email me...**

Cathi

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: Sandy Pollock

Secretary: Zoe Bishop-Kinlyside (Secretary) and Chris Bruton (Assistant Secretary)

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore 4069

Secretary@moggillcreek.org.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 news direct to mccgeditor@outlook.com.au.**

Newsletter Editor: Dr Catherine A. Lawrence (Cathi)

MCCG is Proudly Supported by

I ♥ BNE
That's why I'm learning about sustainability.



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Membership

A reminder from Suzanne Philp, Membership Secretary to check that you have renewed your Membership for this year.

Have you checked that you've renewed your Membership? Annual MCCG membership costs just \$20 per person, with membership running from January to December each year. Financial membership enables you to access the following benefits:

- Free expert advice on revegetating your own land;
- Free local native plants, grown in our nursery, for use in revegetation projects and gardens in the Moggill Creek Catchment and surrounds;
- Invitations to attend MCCG events, including quarterly public talks which cover a range of topics of interest to members;
- This quarterly MCCG newsletter, containing a regular balance of articles on people and activities in the catchment with topical and informative articles on local environmental values; *and*
- The opportunity to become a catchment volunteer as part of one of our bush care working groups or at our native nursery.

Renewals can be made online (to join *or* renew, visit www.moggillcreek.org.au/membership/). Please don't forget that if you pay by bank transfer, OSKO, credit card, or cheque/cash without an accompanying membership form being completed, please **email** us with any changes to mobile phone, email, address and/or surname. Thank you.

Suzanne Philp

New Contact Details

Please update your records! The email address for the MCCG Secretary is changing to Secretary@moggillcreek.org.au (so please delete any records of former mccgsecretary@live.com.au email address). Other Committee and Section Lead contact details are also now updated on the website (visit <http://www.moggillcreek.org.au/contact-mccg/> for more). Thank you!

Chris Bruton

New Bushcare Support

After major setbacks, due to the recent rain and resulting flood damage to many of our bushcare sites, we have received some welcome good news. Last year, in collaboration with *Challenge Employment & Training* (Challenge), I applied for a new round of funding from the Queensland Government under

'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' to provide support for students undertaking the Conservation & Ecosystems Management (CAEM) certificate.

MCCG will facilitate practical experience at two of our bushcare sites: Rowena Street park and Gap Creek/Deerhurst Rd park, with support and assistance from Brisbane City Council. This follows similar support for two groups of students in 2020 and 2021, most of whom are now working in roles that draw on the skills acquired through the program. A former student, Alex Berghuis, now also leads the Rafting Ground volunteer bushcare group!



The latest group of students (*see photo, above*) started work at the end of May, under the very able guidance of Jason Pardoe from Challenge. Jason, who has a wealth of knowledge and experience in bushcare work, will provide training and oversee the program in collaboration with myself and Deb Craig, who leads the Gap Creek bushcare group. Jason tells me that he himself was trained by Andrew Wilson, the manager of our Native Plant Nursery.

We wish the new group of students all the best in their endeavours. I feel sure that they will all benefit from the experience, especially so if the weather improves over the coming months!

Jim Pope

Early Penda Flowering?

I have been surprised this year to find my 30 year old Golden Penda (*Xanthostemon chrysanthus*) in profuse flowering from around 8th April and attracting the normal crowd of Rainbow Lorikeets and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets to feast on the flowers. A check of my (photographic) records from last year and previous years indicates that such flowering normally does not occur until at least four weeks later in May. The Wikipedia article states that "flowering can appear at any time of the year," but I assume this relates to flowering in different geographical areas, rather than at different times of the year in the same location. I wondered whether this was the result of



Rainbow Lorikeet & Golden Penda (image: Bruce Dymock)

global warming or the wet late summer, but my daughter suggested that it could normally be brought on by an early autumn. This makes sense to me but—writing this in mid-May—I have not noticed any obvious early cool weather, so I don't think that's the reason. Does anyone out there have an explanation for this very early flowering? What *is* the answer?

Bruce Dymock

Mare's Eggs in Brookfield?

The recent extended wet spell means we may see the unusual sight of gelatinous and somewhat leathery masses of a species of blue-green algae (some of the genus *Nostoc*), on unvegetated soil surfaces in shaded areas. These dark greenish jelly-like organisms are known as Mare's eggs, star jellies or witches' butter. Sometimes found on the bed or banks of creeks or rivers, they may form translucent, egg-like structures.



Photo 47568720, © René Stalder, some rights reserved (Creative Commons BY-NC)

Unlike some other blue-green algae, they are harmless, and sometimes seem to help retain soil and moisture. We haven't officially recorded these in our catchment, but they have definitely been recorded in nearby Brisbane creeks, as well as the Mt Crosby district.

Look out for them!

Sandy Pollock

Have You Spotted the Red Triangle Slug (*Triboniophorus graeffei*) ?

Having spotted this quirky-looking slug, I had to find out a little more. A quick online search uncovered some fascinating information—including the following facts, extracted from [Wikipedia](#):

- # The red triangle slug (*Triboniophorus graeffei*) is a species of large air-breathing land slug.
- # This large (up to 15cm), often colourful and striking-looking species is Australia's largest native land slug.
- # Found in eastern Australia, these slugs graze on algae which grows on the surface of the smooth bark of some eucalyptus trees and on rocks.
- # Sometimes the slugs enter houses and have been known to graze on bathroom mould.
- # This species has an unusual defensive mechanism—secreting a kind of sticky mucus (different from the slippery slime secreted when it moves) that is strong enough to glue predators down for days. The glue is strongest in wet areas, but is less sticky as it dries.



Picture: A hand-sized red triangle slug (Image credit: Zoe Bishop-Kinlyside)

Delving a little further, I came across a recent ABC Brisbane [article](#), which includes the following:

The striking red triangle slugs have emerged due to wetter than normal weather conditions in the south-east corner. Queensland Museum honorary research fellow Dr John Stanisic, aka "the snail whisperer", said finding native slugs in the backyard was a very good sign of a healthy ecosystem." Everyone should have a slug in their backyard," he said.

Chris Bruton

Bush Bites: Just Another Tree?

Do visit the MCCG website for more, as this is just a 'taster' of Ed Frazer's latest *Bush Bite*.

Across Gold Creek from my hide, where I have been monitoring a breeding Platypus (see Ed's photo, this page) in recent years, is a Sandpaper Fig, arching over one of the two large ponds of the creek. I have no idea how old the tree is, but it has clearly seen better days: it has lost many branches, and shows several signs of old age (including severe termite attack).



This particular Sandpaper Fig has many decayed limbs, and one hole is the resting place of an elderly Northern Mountain Possum (see Ed's picture, above), who camps here during the day when he is visiting this part of his territory. The Sandpaper Fig is interconnected with other trees along the creek by several vines. When the possum wakes up in the evening, he climbs upwards and takes off on an aerial highway that covers much of the creek.

The possum is joined by many other inhabitants who also use this same network. Safe from cats and other predators, young water dragons sleep along the thinner branches during the night. If the Water Dragons sense danger, they just plop into the water and swim to safety (see Ed's front cover picture).

Many birds frequent the fig's canopy – seeking insects, or enjoying the fruit. Striated Pardalotes use the fig as a staging post, as they excavate their many holes in the bank of the creek where they raise their young.

Most of the figs fall into the water and there is always a ball of Eel-tailed Catfish waiting below. The Sandpaper Fig also drops a considerable number of leaves throughout the year, which rot down in the water and start a food chain (involving bacteria and fungi, which are eaten by worms and aquatic insects such as dragonfly, mayfly and midge larvae, which are then eaten by fish and platypus). The creek is usually ankle deep in the mulm (derived from the

leaves and fruit of the tree), and the platypus's bill with its electrified sensors is ideally adapted to sifting out the insects and worms contained in the debris.

When the creek floods the mulm is washed away and a new cycle develops where the whole process speeds up with the input of minerals and light. Floods undercut the banks developing suitable dens for the platypus and water rats. The roots of the Sandpaper fig stabilise the bank, as underground the fig is just as large as the aboveground branches and trunk. The fig produces two distinct types of roots: structural roots support the trunk (and branches and take up water), and fine roots collect the nutrients to feed the growth.

The trees along the creek are essential for the health of the creek and support an amazing amount of wildlife. Clearing to the edge of the creek destroys this habitat and leads to a breakdown of the ecology of our waterways. The work of the MCCG bushcare groups in revegetating our waterways is vital to maintaining Moggill and Gold Creeks in a condition that is as close to pristine as any waterway in Brisbane.



FOOTNOTE: The Sandpaper Fig was snapped off by the recent flood and washed downstream to the bridge at the junction of Adavale St. and Savages Rd. The Mountain Possum hole survived but it is very exposed, and I doubt it will be used again. A few young branches remain but the main trunk was severed about 2m (metres) above the ground. The entire root system survived and held the bank well so the old tree will rise again, but it will be many years before it plays its part in supporting the animals with food and the aerial highway above the creek. In the meantime, other young trees will take advantage of the extra light and take the old fig's place in the canopy above Gold Creek.

Ed Frazer

Date Claimer

Quarterly Talk, Tuesday 28 June 2022, 7pm (Kenmore Library): Dr Bill MacDonald, SEQ Rainforests, with special focus on the species of our Catchment.

MCCG Photography Competition

Blue skies are here, so it must be time to start taking photos for the 2022 MCCG Photo Comp!

As a reminder, key dates are as follows:

- Receiving of Open entries Sat 15th October
- Digital Young Persons entries can be submitted in the first two weeks of October (1-14 October)
- Kenmore Village Display will be during the week of Monday 17th October.
- The Display closes with the Award Ceremony on Saturday 22nd October (2pm)

Rebecca Bain

Nursery

Nursery open days were held on 6th and 20th June (9am–12noon).

When visiting the Nursery (usually open on 1st and 3rd Monday mornings), please do return/donate any pots you have. If you are interested in volunteering at the MCCG Nursery, please speak with Bryan or Andrew.

Winter Froggin' Around

Well, I'm tired of the rain ...but the frogs are loving it. The non-stop summer rains have created perfect conditions for them to breed and feed. A record-breaking wet season provided many frog species with ideal breeding conditions. Large numbers of graceful tree frogs and green tree frogs were calling around the house. I rarely hear them this often. Frogs, like most species have *boom* and *bust* cycles. Larger numbers of frogs support our biodiversity; mammals, birds and reptiles, all eat frogs. Eastern sedge frogs, tusked frogs, and striped marsh frogs have been calling from the dam. I still haven't heard the emerald spotted tree frogs or great barred frogs since the dry summer a few years ago. Stony creek frogs have been calling in the creek, and their tadpoles were seen in shallow pools in-between flooding events. Of course, cane toads have been breeding in the dam and creek.

The bleating tree frog—previously thought to be a single species—has now been recognised as three separate species, due to differences in appearance, call, and genetics. The 'original' species, which is found around the NSW/QLD border, is now known as the robust bleating tree frog. Two newly-described species have been named the slender bleating treefrog (which can be found in QLD, including in Brisbane) and the screaming tree frog (which is found from Taree and into Victoria). For more, see the Australian Geographic article (23rd November, 2021).

Building a frog hotel is a great way to support certain species of frog, such as tree frogs, whose habitat is

under threat due to increased urbanisation. A frog hotel won't attract frogs to your garden, but it will provide a hide-out for frogs that already reside on your property. If you've had frogs popping up in inconvenient places, like your toilet, you might want to think about building a frog hotel to provide an alternative space outdoors that they can utilise for shelter. For more information check out the QFSI Frogsheet (Summer 2021—visit www.qldfrogs.asn.au/) or have a look at "A guide to making a frog hotel" with frog expert Jodi Rowley (Australian Geographic, 2nd April, 2020).

Phil Bird

Seeds: Tulipwood

If you are looking for a small tree as part of a screen, perhaps blocking the view to a neighbour's shed, tulipwood (*Harpullia pendula*) is ideal. It is evergreen, has dense foliage, is not too large, and is also very hardy. Tulipwood is an attractive specimen tree in a moderate-sized garden, and is also one to plant when restoring native rainforest in our district. As a mid-storey survivor in eucalypt woodland it also has a place.

Leaves have up to eight leaflets, these being up to 12cm long and 5cm wide. Flowering is in mid-summer, the 15mm diameter yellowish flowers being in panicles; these are followed by attractive yellow to red two lobed fruit often containing 1-2 black seeds.



Tulipwood is a species we generally have available at our Nursery. The species is locally native, and has been widely planted around Brisbane as a street-side tree, as shown in the photo taken in Kenmore (see image above). Tulipwood is an endemic Australian species, occurring naturally from northern NSW to Coen in tropical Queensland.

More information is available in our 2017 Winter newsletter.

Bryan Hacker

Weeds: Black-eyed Susan

This last year has been one in which climbing weeds have flourished. You must have noticed climbers such as glycine and balloon vine along the roadsides of outer Brisbane and perhaps on your own property too. A somewhat less invasive vine which occurs on our property is the long-lived perennial black-eyed Susan (*Thunbergia alata*), which has flourished during the last few months, ascending and smothering shrubs and trees to a height of several metres. It can readily be identified by its 3-4cm wide orange flowers, which have a black throat (see front cover image). Leaves are heart-shaped, up to 8cm long and 5cm wide.

I was aware of it on our property more than 16 years ago, and wrote an article for our Autumn 2006 newsletter. I should have worked harder to control it then when it was not so rampant. A lesson learned! Black-eyed Susan is native to East Africa but has been widely distributed in the tropics and sub-tropics, introduced as an ornamental. Brisbane City Council includes black-eyed Susan on its weeds list. Not notifiable, it is listed as Class R (reduce populations).

Bryan Hacker

Trimming Trees

Many years ago when I was assisting a group with gardening at the Freemason's Homes at Sandgate, an older gentleman picked me up on the way I was trimming small branches off a small tree.

His suggestion was that I should trim off the branch as close as possible to the trunk, as this enabled the bark to grow over the cut and seal it. I had been cutting the offending branch off around three to six centimetres from the trunk, but this alternative method provides greater protection against disease, including decay.

One exception to this rule will be when larger limbs are being removed from trees such as Eucalypts and the plan is to undertake the trimming to provide a hollow in the remaining section of the trimmed branch. This can be achieved by hollowing out the remaining section of the limb with a small chain saw or other tool.

Bruce Dymock

Bushcare Working Bees

Working Bees are back, and there is so much to do. If you want to know what goes on at a working bee, and why people volunteer, check out this video from our Rafting Ground Reserve bushcare group. An if you are keen to participate in your local bushcare group, please get in touch with the relevant section leader.

Tracey Read

April Quarterly Talk

The April talk by Monica Richter (Senior Manager, Low Carbon Futures, Worldwide Fund for Nature [WWF]) was well-attended. Monica spoke about Economic strategies to mitigate climate change – provoking much interesting conversation and many questions on the night.

Monica mentioned a mini movie, screening nationally, which sparked some interest. Unfortunately the Brisbane screening has already passed, but the website details are: <https://theregenerators.co/> and <https://theregenerators.co/regenerating-australia/>.

Chris Bruton

Health & Safety

I'm sure some of our bushcare volunteers will have been frustrated by the time taken for the post-flood all-clear. The delay was necessary to undertake a post-flood risk assessment of all Habitat Brisbane sites, for legal and insurance purposes. But it is unfortunate that this process took so long; a quicker response might have hastened the recovery process.

I understand that the BCC staff were initially assigned to more urgent duties, and then had their work cut out to carry out these assessments on all 163 sites across the city. With that in mind, I believe the process could have been expedited by using the expertise of many of the more experienced Habitat Brisbane Group Leaders, who are required to carry out a risk assessment for their site annually.

Jim Pope

Creek Health Monitoring Project

Great to hear about the CHMP dates in Tracey Read's regular emails to Members. If YOU took part in one of the survey days, then we'd love to hear about your experience (and see your photos) in the next MCCG Newsletter. Please email mccgeditor@outlook.com with your story (no later than 1st September 2022).

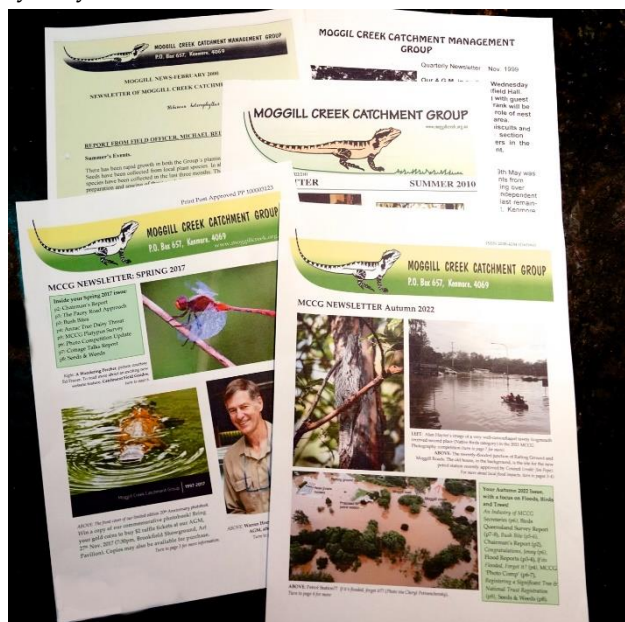
The MCCG Creek Health Monitoring Project (CHMP) is a Citizen Science project. Volunteers are always welcome to take part in a water bug, fish identification, and water health survey (in June 2022, ending on 19th June). Survey days are suitable for budding beginners and macro-invertebrate maestros, with team leaders available as guides. For more information, email CHMP@moggillcreek.org.au (or RSVP using [eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com)). CHMP is supported by the Queensland Government, Queensland Citizen Science Grants, and Brisbane City Council.

Tracey Read

Moggill Magic: Our Newsletter

Ed Frazer's popular Moggill Magic feature has highlighted the work of many individuals who are making significant contributions to the catchment. Your Editor did not know that Ed had decided to feature the Newsletter in this latest feature (*thanks for the surprise, Ed!*). Please note that Peter Strickland's kind words in this feature were complimenting the MCCG on Ed's recent article about wildlife resilience during the recent floods (*see Autumn issue*).

My 'Moggill Magic' for this issue features the Moggill Creek Catchment Group Newsletter, which has been published quarterly since the Group was started 22 years ago. The Newsletter has been the main communication vehicle for the MCCG and is widely read by local members, and even as far-a-field as Sydney and Melbourne.



Pictured: A sample of MCCG Newsletters from the November 1999 first issue, through to 2022 (Image credit: Ed Frazer).

The Newsletter has covered the efforts of MCCG Bushcare Groups, as well as the Annual Photo Competition, The Kids' Day at the Cottage, Dale's Cottage Talks, and the recent popular evening presentations. Our Newsletter has also included informative local articles on native plants, weed control, and native fauna. We are fortunate to have several experts living within the catchment who have contributed authoritative articles on a wide range of subjects—from birds, butterflies, frogs, and landscaping, through to platypus and creek health.

None of this would have been possible without the dedicated work of our Editors—in particular the late

Graeme Wilson (our longest-serving Editor), and Cathi Lawrence (our present Editor).

This issue is Cathi's 23rd Newsletter, and she has brought a professional expertise to the Newsletter that has lifted the publication to an exceptionally high standard. Cathi has not only produced a highly attractive publication, but she has also cleverly cajoled the contributors of articles to supply the Newsletter with a regular balance of articles on people and activities in the catchment, as well as with topical and informative articles on the fauna and flora of the area. The work that goes into producing each issue is enormous, and Cathi's highly-disciplined approach results in the timely production of the newsletter each quarter.

A recent letter to the MCCG Secretary put it well:

Dear Zoe, Thank you for the latest Newsletter, what a delightful and informative issue. I was really interested in the information on the likelihood of our native wild life survival during the flood. It would seem that Nature is able to cope so much better than the humans. The article was well illustrated and most informative. As someone who finds using a computer difficult, I really appreciate the Newsletters and can only admire those responsible in producing such an excellent product. Thank You, Peter Strickland.

The MCCG Newsletter is truly Moggill Magic and a large contributor to the success of the Moggill Creek Catchment Group.

Ed Frazer

e-newsletter? Just email the MCCG Secretary with 'email newsletter' in the subject line, and add your name and address in the message. Thank you.

PS: A Curious Echidna Called By...



Chris Bruton shared these photos (*above*) of a recent Kenmore Hills caller... trying to escape the rains?!