



Dedicated to a better Brisbane



Pullen Pullen Catchments Group

A Landcare Group

Pullen Pullen Catchments Group

Meetings

Meetings are held at 7pm on the first Wednesday of each month at Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre, 250 Grandview Road, Pullenvale.

Website

www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au

Working Bees

Pullenvale Forest Park – 2nd Sunday of the month, 8.30 – 11 am
Anstead Bushland Reserve – 4th Sunday of the month, 8.30 - 11 am.

Tools, gloves, etc are provided at Working Bees. Just wear sturdy boots, tough clothes and bring water and a hat!

Committee Members 2015

President:	John Ness	3202 7556	president@pullenpullencatchments.org.au
Vice President:	Richard Ponsonby	3202 9484	members@pullenpullencatchments.org.au
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Committee Members:	Brian Dean	3202 8553	<i>Bushcare Coordinator, Anstead</i>
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	Ron Tooth	3374 1002 (W)	
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Creek Catchment Officer	Emma Maltby	3178 9078	emma.maltby@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Membership Options

Membership fees are:

- Annual Membership – \$10 per person payable on March 1 each year
- Life Membership – \$100 per person

We are delighted to accept donations.

- Send a cheque payable to PPCG to PO Box 1390, Kenmore, 4069 or
- Transfer the funds electronically to BSB 064 152, Account No.10107038 Ref: your name.

“The Pullen Pullen Catchments Group acknowledges the support of the Brisbane City Council for costs associated with the website, the printing of Streamlines and with running the working bee mornings in Anstead Bushland Reserve and Pullenvale Forest Park.”

NEWS

New Treasurer The Treasurer's position is vacant no longer. Kaaren Ness has volunteered (?) to take on the position and is in the process of installing the computerised system on her computer and becoming familiar with it. Thank you, Kaaren. Our retired Treasurer Tracy pointed out that there was about \$1400 left in a grant from Brisbane City Council. This money will be used to cover the cost of informative signs (see page 8) and printing more information leaflets for Anstead Bushland Reserve and for replacing deteriorating signs at Pullenvale Forest Park.

Our keen Convenors at both Anstead Bushland Reserve and Pullenvale Forest Park have already organised working bees which have been well-attended, despite the heat.

At **Anstead Bushland Reserve**, Brian Dean enthusiastically led us in weeding the area in which informative signs were installed at the February Working Bee. One of our keen volunteers spotted some severely damaged leaves on one of our arch enemies, Chinese Elm, *Celtis sinensis*. We feel fairly safe in assuming that the damage was caused by the Celtis Leaf Beetle (*Menippus cynicus*). Adults and larvae feed on the young foliage. The beetles are native to central coastal Queensland where they feed on the native tree, *Celtis paniculata*. Recently, the beetle has extended its range further south and is now common in Brisbane. (Information from the Queensland Museum website). Great to see something attacking the Chinese elm.



Celtis leaf beetle damage on Chinese Elm

Working Bees at Anstead Bushland Reserve will be held on March 27, April 24 and May 22. Everyone is welcome and a great morning tea will be the reward for your effort!

At **Pullenvale Forest Park**, Lynn Brown organised a gentler start to the year with botanist, Daniel Rekdahl, leading us on a walk through the Park talking about points of interest, not only botanical but also geological, ornithological and ecological. A Night Walk scheduled for December 2015 had to be cancelled due to damage caused by a mini-tornado and the evidence of its power was still obvious. The native vines maliciously cut down last year are re-sprouting so vigorously that it looks as though we may have even more vines than we had before! The person responsible for the damage has been identified and fined by the Council.

Working Bees at Pullenvale Forest Park will be held on March 13, April 10 and May 8. Again, everyone is welcome and you will be rewarded with an excellent morning tea in great company.

On the **Education** front, there are several exciting developments. Our Creek Catchment Officer, Emma Maltby, outlined a project involving 15 QUT students who will spend time with each of three Catchment Groups in the Brisbane area, mainly working on leadership skills. Johnathon Rhodes from UQ is looking at the activities of catchment groups with a view to developing projects for Honours students. One of Johnathon's interests is the role of human social factors in conservation decision making.

Ron Tooth is planning several events, including a walk with botanist Daniel Rekdahl in second term. A local ecologist who may be able to provide training is being interviewed and a night walk is planned for December. Emma mentioned a workshop on Community Well-being and Sense of Connection, pointing out that too often we are so involved in hands-on work that we forget to stop and reflect on life around us, how we became involved in environmental issues, where we are going from here, etc. The possibility of a tour of the Pullenvale Environmental Centre was also raised.

Pullen Pullen Catchments Group will have an information booth at the function for the naming of **John Sprent Reserve** at Moggill (see page 7) on February 27.

We recently received notice of the **Cubberla-Witton Catchment Network's Annual General Meeting** to be held at 6.30 pm for 7 pm on Tuesday March 22 at the CWCN Centre, 47-57 Hepworth St, Chapel Hill. The guest speaker is Dr Tim Heard, an ex-CSIRO scientist and long-term keeper and promoter of Australia's stingless bees and native bees in general. Tim is the author of The Australian Native Bee Book and runs Sugarbag Bees which offers a range of services for people interested in keeping stingless bees. Sounds most interesting!



President's Annual Report for 2015

John Ness

PPCG in the Brisbane Context

The Pullen Pullen Catchments Group is one of about 12 catchment groups or similar, active in the Brisbane area defined by the Brisbane City Council (BCC) boundaries. Before discussing the details of the PPCG operations in 2015, the overall picture of where the PPCG fits within the Brisbane area may be useful.

The total area within the BCC jurisdiction is 1350km². Approximately 1,150,000 people live in that area so this gives an average population density of 850 people per km² or 8-9 people per ha. Since a lot of Brisbane is made up of roads, parks, industrial sites and the river itself, the population density per livable area is much higher. The river itself winds for nearly 115km through the Brisbane area from Ipswich to Moreton Bay.

Parks, reserves and sports grounds make up about 90km² within Brisbane with about 20km² of that, or 2000ha, for nature reserves typical of those in the Pullen Pullen Catchment. This gives about 580 people for each ha of natural area.

The Pullen Pullen Catchment area is around 55km² and Pullen Pullen Creek winds its way for about 15km through the catchment, starting in the northwest corner and flowing down to the Brisbane River. The first 4km or so is mainly ephemeral with the next 10km usually flowing but shrinking to disconnected waterholes in extended dry periods. The last 1-1.5km is tidal and the water is brackish in this stretch where it flows into the Brisbane River.

Pullen Creek starts in the hills 2km to the west of Pullen Pullen Creek and joins Pullen Pullen Creek 4km from the Brisbane river entrance. Pullen Creek has water only after rain for the last 1km or so where it joins Pullen Pullen Creek but the midsection usually retains water. The water quality in both Pullen and Pullen Pullen Creeks is about the best of all creeks flowing into the Brisbane River.

The catchment area fully encloses the suburbs of Pullenvale, Anstead and Pinjarra Hills with about half of Bellbowrie included. Based on the 2011 census with a typical 8% growth applied, the number of people within the Pullen Pullen Catchment is around 8,500 or about 1.5 people per ha – about one sixth that of the overall Brisbane area.

The BCC has about 150ha of land in the catchment listed as parks or reserves and the northwest corner of the catchment is largely state forest with an area of about 10km². The population density of catchment residents per ha of parks is then around 56 per ha or about one tenth that for the typical Brisbane resident. This low population density is a key distinguishing feature of the Pullen Pullen Catchment and a further characteristic is the relatively high proportion of people aged 55 and above. It is about 25% compared to 21% for Brisbane.

For some, high density living is the epitome of economic prosperity and culture but fortunately not so for most catchment residents. Indeed, Anstead and Pinjarra Hills have remained almost static in numbers over the last 15 years with most of the increase happening in Pullenvale and Bellbowrie.

Basic PPCG Data

Membership	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
1 year members	19	8	-
3 year members	98	50	68
Life members	127	137	137
Total	244	195	205

Committee: Held 10 Meetings for the year ~ 150hrs

Sunday Morning Working Bees: 10 in Anstead Bushland Reserve ~ 375hrs of work
10 in Pullenvale Forest Park ~ 180hrs of work

The membership categories were modified in 2014/15. With an overall population of 8500 in the catchment, the PPCG has a take up rate of around 2.5%

2015 Operations

The PPCG has three main activities or reasons for existence: These are:

1. Regeneration/weeding/floral maintenance of public land (usually BCC owned)
2. Support of Wildlife/Conservation
3. Education on matters of environment

The PPCG does not get directly involved in the arguments over land developments and rezoning but will occasionally make submissions if such proposals are regarded as detrimental to the environmental amenity of local residents and wild life.

In 2015, the main activities were:

1. Anstead Bushland Reserve

Weeding and planting
Green Army assisted with clearing in the northern section
Labelling of key plants along the walking tracks completed planning and approval stage.
Bird Hide proposal did not hatch

2 Pullenvale Forest Park.

Weeding and planting
Clean up and repair after Pullen Pullen Creek flood
Unauthorised cutting of large native vines

3. Airlie Rd Park

Contractor clearing and planting (organised by SEQ Catchments)
Ongoing mowing, watering and weeding along riparian zone.

4. Wildlife

Ongoing wildlife support, feeding and care for native animals

5. Educational Walks

Two organised through Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre and PFP

To carry out the above functions as well as the administrative activities requires the efforts and time of a number of dedicated volunteers. Brian and Nola Dean took over the Bushcare coordinator role at Anstead from Ray Krafft who still remains an active worker. Lynn Brown took on the challenge of PFP Bushcare coordinator and dealing with the BCC. The PPCG and BCC have managed to work together more cooperatively since the major restructure of the catchment coordinator program with Simon Fox and Emma Maltby from the BCC being particularly helpful.

The key communication roles of Streamlines Editor and Website Coordinator have been undertaken by Helen Ogle and Nola Dean, respectively. The most challenging committee jobs of Secretary and Treasurer were filled by Liz Dominquez and Tracy Barrie, respectively, with Tracy retiring from this role in 2016. The committee would like to thank Tracy for not only doing the routine work of a treasurer so well but also setting up the computerised system so that it can be readily taken over by her successor. The PPCG remained financially viable with adequate funds to support some activities irrespective of grants.

2016 Projections

Anstead Bushland Reserve

Roll out the plant labelling program
Seek BCC support for a safe walking track down to the quarry
Perhaps revisit bird hide proposal

Pullenvale Forest Park

A CCA grant for \$9000 to assist with the removal of feral vines and woody weeds will be undertaken. Lynn Brown submitted and won the grant proposal.

Airlie Rd Park

Apply for involvement from Volunteering Australia or similar student volunteer programs
Increase planting along riparian zone cleared by SECQ contractors.

The Caring for Country project being managed by SEQC nominated regeneration activities in Anstead Bushland Reserve and possibly Airlie Rd Park as sites for work over the 3 year life of the project. This work started in 2015 and should continue through 2106-17 although the schedule is not controlled by the PPCG.

Other

The Brisbane Catchment Network (BCN) is the umbrella organisation for catchment groups in Brisbane. It was quite active in 2015 and looks to continue this in 2016. Unfortunately, a lot of the energy of the group has to be applied to preventing governments from approving further destruction of the natural environment rather than actively pursuing positive activities but the BCN had a number of notable successes. The PPCG will aim to be a more active member in 2016.



Small is Beautiful

Jane Turnbull

I moved to Pullenvale in 2003. My block is probably the smallest in Pullenvale at approximately half an acre, or about 2000 square metres, as it was partly resumed in the 80s by the Department of Main Roads. It is also very close to the Moggill Conservation Park and Primley Street Nature Reserve. This has been a blessing in disguise for my bird life as there is a Main Roads Reserve next door to my part bush block, and this has been largely untouched since its resumption. It is a good jungle-like refuge for little birds. Unfortunately it is also full of weeds. There are no infestations of the real villains, like Madeira Vine, but there is some Asparagus Vine and Lantana, which I am keeping a watch on.

When I retired in 2009, I became more interested in the birds of my area, and joined Birdlife Australia and Birds Queensland to increase my knowledge of local birds. With the help of members, and local experts like Jim Butler, I have gained a great deal of information and insight into what is important for these little visitors. The biggest cause of the decline of local species, and Australia-wide of course, is habitat loss. Locally, that means more housing, less bush, and rigorous spraying and slashing of local paddocks and bushland on a regular basis. The latter has helped to cause a dramatic slump in numbers of the little bush birds in Pullenvale. The severe drought of the mid 2000s also played a part, and of course the increase in unrestrained pets in suburban areas is a great problem. It saddens me to see so many dogs off-leash in local bush areas, and cats which are allowed to roam, particularly at night. I would urge members to ask dog owners to leash their dogs, when you see them running off-leash in bush areas.

Back to birds, my little block now has its own "hot-spot" on the international atlas of bird sighting, hosted by Cornell University, <http://ebird.org/content/australia/>. Over a period of about five years, I have made 33 lists of sightings, with a total of 101 species, within my block, and the adjoining small road reserve. This is where you can see my lists - <http://ebird.org/ebird/hotspot/L2559913>.

You can see from the lists that little birds are becoming less common. Our gardens are becoming much more attractive to bigger more aggressive birds like Currawongs, which are particularly fond of *Murraya* berries from all our neat hedges. Small, hidden intermittent streams and water holes are being dug up, becoming weed-infested and then slashed back, removing hiding spots for tiny birds like Thornbills, Finches, Mannikins, Wrens and Honeyeaters. When I first moved here in 2003, they were all regular visitors, and were very numerous on the block on the corner of Boyle and Mount Crosby Roads. This has since been built on and is regularly mowed.

In 2015, I was being slowly defeated by Madeira Vine, Asparagus, Panic Grass, Lantana and Japanese Sunflowers. The problems had increased enormously since the 2011/12 floods, and in the drought summers since those wet years, weeds have been taking over. So I enlisted the help of Andrew Wilson, from The Moggill Creek Catchment Group Nursery, and slowly he has worked magic. Painstaking spot weeding and treating roots, has 99.9% removed Madeira Vine, Asparagus, Ochna, Sunflowers, Milkweed, and Caster Oil plants. We have started to replant under the existing canopy of mainly Black Wattles (*Acacia leiocalyx*) and an unusual and flourishing number of *Alstonia constricta* trees, *Capparis arborea*, *Alphitonia excelsa* and one beautiful *Jagera pseudorhus*, which is starting to seed in the area.

I was surprised at how many local natives started to appear, once Andrew insisted on NO spraying or cutting of the understorey, which I had assumed was "just" panic grass. We have started to plant in sections, with a fairly eclectic mix, as Andrew has commented that the block does seem to have unusually strong growth in species he would not have expected, but also has 'missing links'. For instance, although there are many Green Kamalas coming up now, not a single Red Kamala has appeared spontaneously, so we have planted one or two.

Despite the extraordinarily dry conditions, almost 100% of our tube plantings have grown well, and I am just waiting for more rain! The biggest problem has been "something" eating some of the plants repeatedly, and eventually killing them. We are unsure of what is doing this, as there are feral deer on the block at times, and also hares and wallabies.

In an area closer to the house, a hedgerow of some random plants I had made some years ago, had become infested with Chinese Elm seedlings, and other weeds. We have cleared these, and planted a number of understorey and herbaceous plants, just to see what does well. Also in this area, I was delighted to see a small violet-like ground cover appearing, which Andrew identified as *Pseuderanthemum variabile*.

...AND THERE SHALL BE A SIGN

Brian Dean

Several, in fact, installed alongside a much-used track in Anstead Bushland Reserve which runs parallel to the Quarry face (and safety fence) from the Lookout to the start of the steep path leading down to the Quarry itself. The Anstead Bushcare group has been planting and weeding this area for some time, and, because of the track's popularity with Reserve users – walkers, watchers, joggers, riders – and the interest generated by the plants which have been put in, often to revive a site suffering from the 2011 flood's aftermath, we decided to create an 'information' track, naming and describing the vegetation in this area.

The signs we came up with (you can see a sample below) are intended to give information about the plant, perhaps to assist park users who might be looking for the kind of plant which could be desirable in private properties in the neighbourhood, or simply to inform members of the public about the Flora of Anstead Reserve. We tried one or two prototypes for the signs, based on the following criteria:

- There should be enough information in the signs to enable people to understand and visualise the plant, and to know its habits and characteristics. The botanical name would be paired with the common name, and other information would be in non-technical language.
- The signs should be robust and (naturally!) weatherproof, easy to install and, when necessary, move or change. (One problem with the very handsome signs along the nearby walking track is that some of them have outlived the plants they describe – and they are very firmly concreted in place!)
- The signs should be reasonably cheaply made, because it's hoped that we may be able to place similar ones elsewhere in the Reserve, if the current ones do indeed serve a useful purpose.

So we've gone ahead and produced a batch of these signs, at a bit under \$10 each. There are several people who should be thanked for creating these items economically, and generally providing help along the way. PPCG member Richard Ponsonby first came up with the idea, and Bill Hutchison produced a first prototype. Habitat officer Simon Fox advised us on the wording of the signs, as well as acting as liaison with BCC, and suggesting improvements. 'Shed West' members Don Bray and Malcolm Johnson welded the components of the signs (gratis!), and former Anstead Group coordinator Ray Krafft helped to paint and assemble them. The signs were laser engraved by Mark Dozzi of 'Lasermark' at a generous discount, and, of course, the members of the ABR Bushcare group made sure that the signs were next to the right plants, and lined up - like a green army!



Newly labelled Rock Fig in the Fig Garden near the Lookout above the Quarry in Anstead Bushland Reserve

