



Streamlines

Newsletter of the Pullen Pullen Catchments Group Inc.

May 2018

Apologies for the lateness of this issue of Streamlines. I've been enjoying the joys of Europe!

This is a rather selfish issue. Firstly, as a relatively new member, I was not aware of the history of the group so I was very interested to read Brian Dean's summary of our activities that appeared in the March issue of The Local Bulletin. With its Editor's approval, I have included Brian's article in this issue for my edification and, hopefully, yours. Incidentally, we celebrate our 20th Birthday this year!

Secondly, I've long been confused about the various sections within Brisbane City Council involved with environmental projects and their responsibilities. It seemed as though there were too many and their responsibilities overlapped. However, at the February Working Bee at Anstead, I met Paul Devine, our Habitat Brisbane Officer, who clarified the issue by explaining to me the various sections of Council involved in environmental matters. A summary of his comments appears in the NEWS section of this issue. Hopefully, they will clear the air for other members, too.

Our Wildlife Officer, Irene Darlington, has prepared a very personal comment on cats, wildlife and cat enclosures that should interest all members trying to balance pet ownership with wildlife preservation.

Margaret O'Grady has been studying and photographing fungi in Anstead Bushland Reserve for the past year and presents the first three examples so we can expand our knowledge of local flora and fauna.

Following on from the item in the last issue of Streamlines about Australian melaleucas (paperbarks) running rampant in Florida, I've summarised some examples of other Australian 'invaders' from Tim Low's article 'Australians Abroad' which appeared in the July-August 2017 issue of Australian Geographic.

All members are welcome to submit articles to Streamlines via helian@pretirementresorts.com.au. The deadline for the next issue is 15 August 2018.

Very best wishes,

Helen Ogle

Editor

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Pullen Pullen Catchments Group

A Landcare 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 – 1st 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 2017

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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.

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



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

“The PPCG acknowledges the support of the Lord Mayor’s Community Sustainability and Environmental Grants Programs for a grant to help with administrative, bushcare and educational costs”

NEWS

Close to 100 children and adults gathered at **Pullenvale Marketplace** on March 17 for a promotion of the work done by PPCG. Megan from Geckoes Wildlife presented a collection of animals which could be experienced at close range, Rob Whyte talked about Spiders and Jaqueline Hill displayed her wildlife art. Big thank you to Liz for being chief organiser, Brian for preparing displays of PPCG's earlier activities, Brisbane City Council for sponsoring the Geckoes Wildlife show and everyone else who helped on the day. Several visitors expressed interest in the Moggill Wetlands Project and may form the nucleus of a bushcare group there.



Part of the crowd at Pullenvale Marketplace in front of PPCG display



Megan from Geckoes Wildlife

Recent work at **Airlie Road Park** has involved reshaping an eroded bank, removing weeds, installing anchored natural logs to prevent further erosion and planting a range of rushes, sedges and matrushes to stabilise the bank. More recently, deer have eaten new growth appearing above protective covers.



Recently completed bank stabilisation in Airlie Road Park

Anstead Bushland Reserve After earlier rains, Working Bees have largely involved weeding. Six members have undertaken line trimmer and weed spraying training in a bid to accelerate the weed control program. Council has approved changing the working bees to the FIRST Sunday in the month so the next dates are **June 3, July 1 and August 5.**

TRAILBLAZERS WANTED

A few years ago BCC built a riverside lookout in Anstead Bushland Reserve, with fencing, paths and signage explaining the history of the old Sugars quarry workings, remains of which still survive. Pedestrian access to this area is by the old unsealed vehicular track which is uneven and sometimes unsafe, especially after rain.

We would like to create a safe walkway down to the quarry floor and anticipate applying for a grant to do this. Grants become available from time to time, often with a tight submission deadline. PPCG is appealing to its members for help in preparing a grant application. Chiefly we are looking for people who have engineering and/or drafting skills to prepare working drawings for the pathway, which will need to incorporate steps.

Can you help? If so please contact Rob Preslmaier (0488 738 250) or Brian Dean (3202 8553)

Pullenvale Forest Park At the May meeting, Lynn reported that there are a horrific number of weeds in the Park and has been spraying madeira vine. Cat's claw creeper is also re-appearing. Working Bees will be held on **June 10, July 8 and August 12.**

Our Clean, Green Sustainable City Brisbane City Council has released its **Brisbane, Clean, Green Sustainable 2017-2031 Plan.** Its targets include having 40% of mainland Brisbane natural habitat by 2031. Assisting residents work towards this goal, Council has four groups of staff that work with different segments of the community. The first three are part of Council's Community Conservation Partnerships Program.

1. The Wildlife Conservation Partnership Program concentrates on assisting and advising **private land** owners with maintenance and establishment of habitat on their properties. The program offers five agreement types, including Land for Wildlife, each providing a different level of protection and assistance.
2. Habitat Brisbane works with community groups to restore natural habitat on **Council owned parks, remnant bushland and waterways.** At present there are 160 Habitat Brisbane sites. Council aims to have 200 sites by 2020.
3. Creek Catchment Officers work with catchment groups to develop their capacity through skills development and training to plan catchment restoration projects and to support the delivery of project funding.
4. Environment Centres concentrate on educating the public, especially children, about environmental matters. They operate centres at Downfall Creek, Boondall Wetlands and Karawatha Forest.

Coming Events

Guided walk with 'our' wonderful botanist Daniel Rekdal on Sunday June 17. More details to come. Check the website.

Forum 2018 THECA presents 'Citizen Science: Challenges and Benefits for Biodiversity Conservation' on Saturday August 11 at Queensland Centre for Advanced Technologies, corner of Moggill Road and Bainbridge Drive, Pullenvale. The keynote speaker will be Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe, Centre for Environment and Population Growth, Health and Technology, Griffith University. Check theca.asn.au for more details.

National Waterbug Blitz Advance notice of this nationwide, citizen science, water monitoring event to be held throughout October. Waterbugs are small animals without backbones that live in freshwater. Each type has a certain sensitivity to pollution or water quality changes in their environment so the type and number of bugs found in a waterway tells you how healthy it is. Anyone can be involved, spending from 20 minutes to a whole day on the project.





Pullen Pullen Catchments Group – 20 Years Old



Brian Dean

Having survived our teenage years, PPCG enters its third decade.

Conceived and launched in 1998 by Cr Margaret de Wit and committed, among other things, to re-vegetating and regenerating public and private land in an area from Brisbane River in the south almost to Moggill Creek, PPCG cut its teeth on a designated public area alongside Pullen Pullen Creek in the newly-established Woodcrest estate, later to be known as Pullenvale Forest Park.

First President Ian Cameron oversaw the creation of tracks, ambitious planting programmes, the design and construction of bridges and boardwalks and the development of the attractive picnic area. The Bushcare Group which began from this in 2000 is still operating and since then four other PPCG- initiated Bushcare Groups have worked in conjunction with BCC and Habitat Brisbane on public sites in our “patch” – Lather Road park, Glenhurst Road park (later renamed John Wilson Reserve in memory and recognition of one of PPCG’s most active and dedicated members who died in 2006), Moggill Wetlands and Anstead Bushland Reserve.

We’ve also helped design, create and maintain walking tracks and recreational features, seating and signage, and run community education events (workshops, nature walks, festivals etc). We have an active wildlife care programme – we’ve even done a bit of industrial archaeology down in the old Moggill Quarry in Anstead Reserve!

Since the thousands of hours of voluntary work, the thousands of plantings, the buckets of sweat and the untold quantities of goodwill and community spirit have largely taken place in public areas, PPCG’s achievements have been, and continue to be enjoyed by thousands more, the people who live in or visit Brisbane . We deserve a medal, don’t you think? Or maybe an hour or two of your time? Or just go to our website <http://www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au>.

Cats and Wildlife

Irene Darlington

It’s winter and it’s the quieter time of the year for wildlife rescues. There are very few babies in pouches and running around learning how to survive. This is the period in the year of a wildlife carer when we recharge the old batteries and prepare for the forthcoming breeding seasons. These used to be Spring and Summer, but the warmer the months become, many species of wildlife are breeding well into autumn these days.

But there is still a steady number of incoming injured adult wildlife coming in through vets and the public. Cars, electrocution, habitat destruction and our domestic pets are the cause of most of these injured adult wildlife coming in all year around. Especially cat-caught possums and other marsupials, reptiles and birds.

Wildlife carers nurse and raise the orphans of cat-attacked wildlife in great numbers, but despite this most wildlife carers do have their own pet cats. We love our pet cats as much as everyone loves their cats, but it’s how we look after the cats and house them which is quite different to most other people. I have advocated people be responsible cat carers and keep their cats indoors for many years, so that the cats don’t harm the wildlife in the suburbs. You don’t realise exactly how frequently domestic cats will pounce on an animal and ‘play’ with it. Without fail, people who bring me their bitten, punctured and scratched wildlife they rescued from their cats tell me *“I don’t understand. There’s no need for my cats to do this because I feed them so well.”*

Please understand that it doesn’t matter how well you feed your cat, it is the cat’s instinct to want to pounce on the animal and play with it. Cat play usually results in death for the wildlife. The punctures are usually deep and

cause severe internal damage to the possum, bird, lizard etc. It is hard to find punctures as they close over very quickly and frequently get horribly abscessed so the animal dies despite antibiotics and vets' efforts. The 'cat play' and stalking and pouncing is a game to the cat, to the point where the cat will wait in a spot in your garden which the cat has observed possums use as their nightly 'travel route'. A domestic cat will easily wipe out a colony of ringtail possums traversing your garden trees within a week or less.

Wildlife carers usually have their cats indoors and have wired-in verandas or balconies. The cats can use these wired-in areas for sunning themselves and enjoying the great outdoors. But the cats can't leave the wired-in outdoors and the wildlife can't get to the cats, so everyone is happy.

I have recently had a friend of mine, an excellent builder, build a great cat run on the patio adjoining the master bedroom of my house. The 'cat run' consists of a wooden framework with screwed-on galvanised, tough wire to complete the enclosure. There are plenty of jungle gyms and toys inside to keep the cats occupied, as well as their kitty trays and unimpeded access from the cat run into the master bedroom and the rest of the house. The wired in enclosure can be hosed out easily when required and are very easily maintained and kept clean, providing that outdoor sunny play area the indoor cats love. As is normal with any building project, I had to sit down with Patrick first and express to him exactly what I wanted and he planned, quoted and completed the project within 3 days.

So in summary, having your cats enjoy a cat run whilst living as an 'indoor cat' provides a great quality of life to your cats. They are safe, free from the usual outdoor problems of being hit by cars, exposed to disease and parasites and not fighting with other cats. It's peace of mind for the cats human owners too, and a great relief to the many wild animals living and visiting your gardens every day and night. Make sure you get your quotes and pick a reliable builder as I did, as the cost for cat runs can vary by thousands of dollars. So do your homework and enjoy your lovely cats for a long and happy lifetime.



Some examples of cat enclosures

Just a brief reminder that from 1 July 2018, retailers are no longer able to supply single-use lightweight plastic shopping bags less than 35 microns in thickness to customers, for free or at a charge.

Bags that can still be used include barrier bags for unpackaged perishable food such as fruit, vegetables, meat and fish, bin liners and garbage bags, plastic nappy bags and 'dog poo' bags.

Recommended alternatives include reusable 'green' bags, hessian bags, freezer or 'cold' bags, string bags, cotton bags and heavy-duty plastic bags designed for reuse or multiple uses. To maximise the environmental benefit of any reusable shopping bag, it's important that they are reused as many times as possible and recycled at their end-of-life, where possible.



For more information, check out [Plastic shopping bag ban fact sheet - English \(PDF, 1.04MB\)](#)

Fungi in Anstead Bushland Reserve

Margaret O'Grady

I live very close to the Anstead Bushland Reserve and have spent the last 12 months photographing the fungi that grow in the Reserve. I began this project because I thought that the number of different fungi growing in the reserve had declined over 10 years. I'm still not sure if my theory is correct but have enjoyed the hunt for different species anyway. Fungi are interesting and a vital part of the ecosystem in that they are the earth's recycling agents, decomposing dead plant material and returning nutrients to the soil. They are also quite beautiful when inspected close up. Over the next few issues of Streamlines I'll introduce some of the species that I've photographed since April 2017. Below are the first three.



Polyporus arcularius is commonly known as the hexagonal-pored polypore. It causes a white rot of dead hardwoods and is found on sticks and decaying logs, its distinguishing features are its yellowish to orange scaly cap, and the hexagonal or diamond-shaped pores. It is common in eucalypt woodlands across QLD, NSW, VIC and TAS.



Macrolepiota dolichaula is tall with white gills which do not quite reach the stem which has a movable ring and a bulbous base. The cap is almost like a globe when it is young but opens up into a convex shape, up to 125 mm diameter. It is covered in small white scales which wash off when it rains. Usually found growing in short grassland and in small groups, but also occasionally seen in mulched beds. It emerges after heavy rains in summer and autumn and is common in south east Queensland in parks and gardens and in paddocks that have native grasses.



Amanita flavella is a beautiful yellow fungus which is found growing in soil and leaf litter. The fruiting bodies are globose when juvenile, then convex and finally aging to plane. The cap has small scales and grows in diameter to 90 mm. The cap rim is finely striate and the gills are off-white to pale-yellow and crowded.

Australians Abroad

Australian plants and animals are most strongly represented overseas in areas such as South Africa and New Zealand with a congenial climate and substantial trade links over a long period.

Some of the worst weeds in Australia have come to us from **South Africa**. Conversely, South Africa has become a world leader in weed research – largely due to plants introduced from Australia. Wattles and hakeas from

Australia were introduced into South Africa in the 19th century as garden plants and to stabilise loose sand. They, along with introduced pines, now threaten Cape Town's water supply. Thirteen wattles and three hakeas are declared weeds. Kangaroo paws, banksias, bottle brushes, tea trees, gum trees, saltbushes and even waratahs and tree ferns have gone feral. As well as plants, South Africa also has Australian insect pests, flatworms, redclaw crayfish and worms living on those crayfish.

A few red-necked wallabies were released on the South Island of **New Zealand** in 1874. Without predators to curb their numbers, their population grew to more than 500,000, fattening on crops and sheep pastures. Hundreds of thousands have been poisoned and shot and culls are on-going. One of the worst offenders is the brushtail possum with 30 million now calling New Zealand home. They were introduced in the 19th century with the claim that an acre of bush with possums would return more profit from their furs than an acre of grass with sheep. They soon targeted orchard fruit. The pros and cons of possums were debated for decades but no-one defends them now. Populations with densities up to 25 per hectare denude and kill rainforest trees, damage gardens and farms and spread tuberculosis to cattle. As well as mammals and plants, we have also donated frogs, lizards, several birds, blowflies, cockroaches and termites although some of these may have flown or been blown across the ditch rather than hitching a lift on ships or planes.



Red-necked wallaby



Brushtail possum

However, it's not just countries with similar climates that are suffering from unwanted Aussie invasions. Redback spiders are found in Japan, Belgium, New Zealand and other places. Eucalypts, wattles and she-oaks are widely grown on degraded, drought-prone land. Australian tree ferns outcompete local tree ferns in Hawaii. Yabbies and redclaw are tougher than most crustaceans so they are widely farmed and thrive when they escape. The light brown apple moth succeeds because of its broad tastes in food. Red-necked wallabies on Loch Lomond, Scotland, date back to four released in the 1940s and Australian carpet beetles as far north as Yorkshire, England have traded a diet of dried animal skins for textiles.

To quote Tim Low 'Species from everywhere are spreading quickly in a world changing dramatically from globalisation. People and products have become more mobile and so have many species. Some scientists suggest that the Earth has entered a new humanised age, the Anthropocene, and the unprecedented travel of species is part of that phenomenon.' The Anthropocene includes the rise of new ecosystems as animals and plants adapt to their new neighbours. For example, in South Africa, Australian plants now support rich communities of native birds, baboons eat wattle seeds and the movement of kangaroo paws and banksias is abetted by sugarbirds and sunbirds pollinating the flowers. Elephants are eating the bark of wattles in Borneo.

What are the implications of Australian plants and animals growing overseas? The risk is that foreign pests and diseases may adapt to Australian plants and find their way here. Several Australian plants, including eucalypts and Geraldton Wax, are farmed overseas and can serve as breeding grounds for pests. The appearance in Australia of myrtle rust in 2010 illustrates the danger. The rust occurs naturally on rainforest trees in Brazil, spread to plantation grown eucalypts and arrived here possibly on smuggled plants. Its presence threatens a wide range of Australian plants. A large number of new diseases have been identified in eucalypt plantations in China and South America.'

Tim Low concludes that the 'ongoing spread of unwanted species, from Australia and elsewhere, justifies efficient quarantine, risk assessment of imports and a commitment to biological control.