



Streamlines

Newsletter of the Pullen Pullen Catchments Group Inc.

August 2021

Welcome to the August edition of Streamlines which focuses on activities at Anstead Bushland Reserve. Firstly, we are very happy to welcome Gillian Whitehouse who has agreed to take on the position of Bushcare Coordinator at ABR. Gillian brings enthusiasm and a wealth of experience in dealing with bureaucracy to the role.

For many years, enthusiastic volunteers have planted, watered, weeded and weeded and weeded sites in ABR but in no time at all the weeds regrew. Enthusiasm waned. Recent introduction of a new (to us) system of regenerating bushland areas has regenerated interest. John Ness illustrates where we were (p. 4) and Jim Williams describes the 'new' Bradley method that has been used widely around Sydney for many years (p. 5). Jim, Gillian and Karen Roberts have formed a very enthusiastic and energetic leadership group. Karen reports on a Biodiversity Strategic Mapping Seminar and how it may assist PPCG in identifying suitable project areas (p. 7).

In identifying areas suitable for applying the Bradley method, the question of how safe it is for volunteers to work under the High Voltage power lines passing across the Reserve was raised. John Ness investigated magnetic and electric field levels and reports on his findings (p. 9).

An article, 'Dyschoriste – one of our most destructive weeds', appeared in the May 2016 issue of Streamlines. Recently, PPCG received an email from Justin Watson from Gondwana Ecology Group updating the situation with Dyschoriste and inviting local groups to make a collaborative representation to Brisbane City Council about management of this weed (p. 11). Jim Williams has prepared a response from the ABR perspective.

The last item is a summary of Jutta Godwin's report on Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count (p.12).

All members are welcome to submit articles to Streamlines via helian@pretirementresorts.com.au. The deadline for the next issue is 15th November 2021.

Helen Ogle
Editor

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Pullen Pullen Catchments Group

A Landcare Group

Website

www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au

Meetings

Meetings are held at 6 pm on the first Wednesday of each month at Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre, 250 Grandview Road, Pullenvale.

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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.

Working Bees

Anstead Bushland Reserve – 1st Sunday of the month, 8.30 – 11 am.
Pullenvale Forest Park – 2nd 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!



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

Anstead Bushland Reserve Jim Williams and Karen Roberts have marked out 8 possible sites in Anstead for the Bradley regeneration method and on Sunday 4 July a small group was taken on a tour of the sites and gained some practical experience in weed identification and removal.



PPCG Members gaining practical experience in weed identification and removal

These 8 sites are mainly located around the SCIP area that was cleared and replanted in early June. One such site borders the SCIP one so there is a possible side by side comparison between the two methods directly available. The recent rains have been very kind to the asparagus vine in the SCIP site as it is already awash with asparagus vine shoots about 1m or so high (see p. 5). These will have to be removed shortly if that site is not to be overtaken by weeds before the plantings have had time to get established.

Jim and Gillian have developed laminated posters to publicise activities within the Reserve: Jim's to inform passers-by that regeneration work is in progress, Gillian's for use at entrances to the Reserve to publicise the bushcare mornings. The group also planned to recognise National Tree Day on August 1. Unfortunately the activities scheduled had to be postponed due to the lockdown.

Jim Williams (p. 6) and John Ness (p. 4) have contributed articles to this issue of Streamlines on activities within ABR and the advantages of the Bradley method. Jim has circulated images from the wildlife camera he has in the Reserve and Karen Roberts has suggested a monthly update (on Facebook) to stimulate interest in habitat throughout the Reserve. A possibility suggested by Jim would be to rotate the camera through the worksites on a monthly basis, provided this could be done in a secure manner.

Discussion is continuing on the possibility of applying for funding for regeneration work in the Reserve, possibly through the BCC's upcoming Habitat Restoration Action Plans. **Working bees at Anstead Bushland Reserve currently take place on the first Sunday of the month from 8.30 to 11am.**

Pullenvale Forest Park Working bees at Pullenvale Forest Park currently take place on the second Sunday of the month from 8.30 to 11am.

School Nursery Projects At **Moggill State School**, limited re-potting of small plants in the greenhouse has proceeded and the outside area for plants has been increased. Contact has also been made with the teacher in charge of environmental matters at **Pullenvale State School** in regards to establishing a nursery there. The school is currently clearing and planting trees along the lower border with Pullen Pullen Creek. PPCG donated 24 medium sized plants from 9 different species from the stock at Moggill State School nursery on July 24 to help with this.

Airlie Road Park Minor maintenance, mowing and weeding around trees continued.

Weeds, not Dying, Waving

John Ness

I wandered lonely, as a cloud
Along Anstead paths, at tranquil speeds
When all at once I saw a crowd
A host, of rampant feral weeds
Beside the track, a' top the trees
Waving and dancing in the breeze
(*apologies to Willy Wordsworth*)

Photo 1 shows the abandoned weed farm where PPCG volunteers have cleared, planted trees and cut, pulled and poisoned glycine, cobblers pegs, asparagus vine, leucaena, lantana, natal grass, corky passionfruit vine, Chinese elms, etc for well over a decade.



Photo 1

Photo 2 shows a much more recent planting area of around 350 m² only 7 weeks after a contractor cut and cleared the site and dug about 200 holes which QUT students and PPCG volunteers filled with native seedlings. What you can see swaying in the breeze is not the plantings but over 400 freshly minted asparagus vines or more than 1 vine per m². The average height of the vines was about 1m but the longest was 2.5m and having no immediately adjacent tree to climb, had set out on a horizontal journey to find and suffocate the nearest native tree. This is a rate of linear growth of 50mm/day, possibly a local record and outperformed only by some species of bamboo.

The clearing had removed the top layer of weeds, but the subsoil structure of the asparagus vines was left intact. The size of a typical asparagus vine corm is shown in photo 3 and it is clear how all the food energy stored in that sub soil structure along with a sudden burst of sunlight and a good drenching of rain will supercharge the asparagus vine growth. This allows them to easily dominate and outcompete native plants and to achieve their monocultural aspirations.

The only option now, other than abandonment of the site, is to pull out all the corms and do repeat weedings to remove regrowth from any corms missed in the first few phases of weeding as well as new growth from the years of seeds left in the soil. Asparagus vines, with their vigorous growth, stored energy, distributed root network, propagation from extensive fruiting and fearsome defence of sharp thorns along with the ability to climb and smother trees, are indeed a formidable weed species. Pulling out that root network will considerably disturb the top surface of the soil so while a

volunteer might achieve victory over a single asparagus vine, any native seedlings in the uprooted area will also be destroyed so helping to lose the war.



Photo 2



Photo 3

The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration

Jim Williams

In the western areas of Brisbane “Bringing Back The Bush – The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration” can work magnificently well to return areas of our weed infested land back to virtually pristine bush. It is a totally natural method of bush regeneration.

The Bradley method does not involve planting. It involves very gradually returning the environment back in favour of the surviving natives by taking the advantages for growth away from the weeds. Bush regeneration fails if it is treated like gardening or farming. Disturbance of soil kills bush regeneration and enhances weed growth. Suddenly ripping out or whipper-snipping all the weed is one of the worst things somebody could do, as often the natives rely upon their protection to survive. However if nothing is done the weeds will eventually kill the entire bush.

We readily see the upper story of the bush, the towering gums etc. However, the many layers of the bush cannot survive the onslaught of weeds and it is the ground level and soil that needs to be healthy allowing the bush to germinate and reproduce. So in the western Brisbane areas, it is often the gullies and difficult to access areas that have been affected least by forestry, farming, industry and rural development over the past 150 years. Within these areas and alike, are wonderful selections from the 330 (approximately) species of plants that naturally occur in the wider area. Remnant species that have survived 150 years of negative influence are incredibly tough, but their resilience is not endless.

When we first owned our bush block, the weed infestation was extensive and well established, smothering the remnant surviving species. Now 75% of the land has been regenerated to a natural bush environment using the Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration. The bush is now healthy with an amazing mix of flora and fauna, all here in our local area.



Regenerated Bushland following application of the Bradley method

I unashamedly have a passion for the Bradley method of bush regeneration in our area, which is meticulously following well established and proven methods supporting the bush to regenerate itself back to its original state. For me, I was able to achieve this using zero chemicals with almost zero financial cost. Allowing nature to respectfully regenerate the bush is an experience that has enhanced my life. It is a journey where you are immersed in the natural world, where nature makes the decisions, leaving you with a caretaker role.

We would love to share many years of Bradley experience with you. If you have remnant bush on your property, maybe in a difficult to get at, overgrown weed infested gully or similar, you may even wish to consider this method for yourselves. So please feel to contact the PPCG (contactus@pullenpullencatchments.org.au) and myself (jimawilliams@hotmail.com) to discover and experience how natural bush regeneration can be utilized within remnant bushland areas.

For an overview of this method you may wish to view the following SGAP web page address:
<http://anpsa.org.au/APOL4/dec96-5.html>

Biodiversity Strategic Mapping Seminar

Karen Roberts

Here's some key points from the Biodiversity Strategic Mapping seminar I attended via zoom Tuesday night. It was chaired by Andrew Wills.

A key learning was that there's movement towards Habitat Restoration Action Plans for our catchment groups, which will link our projects to the broader BCC strategic targets for improving habitat and connectivity across the city. It was a very positive seminar.

I think after we receive some further information from Brendan (Creek Catchment Officer) on the Habitat Restoration Action Plans we should seek input from all of our members (not just committee) on possible projects which could help hit the BCC targets.

Summary of the workshop below.

Speakers

- **Tina Manners** (environmental policy officer within the BCC Biodiversity Conservation team) spoke about **Brisbane's natural habitat cover and condition**, how it is defined, and how this is key to documenting our ecological successes on site, as well as guiding us where to work jointly to invest our time, money and energy.
- **Samille Loch-Wilkinson** then spoke about the Brisbane Catchments Networks tool and how to use the tool to assist with natural resource management project planning.

BCC Targets – increasing area covered, and the quality of habitat

- 40% natural habitat cover across mainland Brisbane by 2031
- 75% of Brisbane's habitat cover connected and healthy

The aim of these targets is to create a resilient ecological network with a diversity of ecosystems, plants and animals. Often we can't reinstate original habitat (requires right landform, soils, etc which have often been highly modified by historical development) but we can support regrowth and regeneration (poor habitat condition is a temporary state, which requires appropriate management to improve with time) and enhance areas around significant habitat.

The 40% natural habitat cover includes corridor linkages (and street trees form part of this – like glider corridors in the inner city areas). Healthy habitat includes canopy, understory and ground structure. Management of regrowth, with time, can achieve this. Eighty one native ecosystems are recognised across Brisbane.

Future projects – Including things PPCG can do

Projects aimed at increasing the area of habitat coverage OR improving the quality of the areas of existing habitat will have a good chance of being supported by BCC (as these support the strategic targets for the greater Brisbane area):

- Value is placed on immature vegetation which, with time and appropriate management, can improve.
- We can use the BCN Mapping tool (which has the state Vegetation Management Act mapping and local significant ecosystems identified) to assist with mapping out potential projects
- If mapping shows we have endangered or of concern (or even just mapped remnant) Regional Ecosystem (RE) we could pitch projects to improve the condition or reduce threats to these core areas
- Weed management, perimeter planting etc.
- In highly modified areas (where soil profiles and landforms have been significantly modified), may not be possible to reinstate original ecosystems but could create artificial habitat which

could compliment the core natural habitat area (ie dense shrubs around a perimeter of core habitat to minimise edge effects).

- maintain or improve connectivity of habitat nodes with another in the local area (ie habitat nodes along corridors).
- If you have a corridor but can only improve the canopy (street trees) this is ok because arboreal fauna can move through
- Maybe under powerline easements – put in threatened grasses that could be pollinator plants for significant species and adjoining habitat.

Habitat Restoration Plans – longer term plans for our reserves.

- Andrew mentioned that our creek catchments officers will be assisting with the preparation of Habitat Restoration Action Plans within our reserves. These help guide longer term planning and linking the 'site scale' creek catchment and habitat Brisbane project sites with the broader BCC strategic outcomes (40% cover, 75% connected and healthy).

High Voltage Lines across Anstead Bushland Reserve

John Ness

Overview

Two sets of High Voltage (HV) lines bisect the Anstead Reserve. The two sets of power lines run in parallel and have an easement devoid of any tall trees and about 30 m wide directly underneath. The smaller set of power lines is along the southern side and the larger, higher set of three lines is to the north. PPCG has worked in the Fig Garden area which is on the south side of the HV path and in the Native Finger Lime area which is on the north side. The question has been raised about whether volunteers working in those areas relatively close to the HV power lines may be at risk from any electric or magnetic fields due to the HV lines. The lowest power line is around 15 m above ground for the smaller set and about 20 m above ground for the larger set of lines. The power lines are shown in the insets in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

The electric and magnetic fields associated with HV power lines oscillate at 50 Hz and are many orders of magnitude lower in frequency than fields that can cause direct cellular damage due to heating or ionisation. At these low frequencies, it is generally considered that it is the magnetic field that is more likely to affect cellular chemistry in humans. In the first place, the outside electric field is reduced by a factor of 100,000 or more inside a person due to the relatively good conductivity of the body. For example, a person standing directly underneath a 415 kV power line that is about 40 m above the ground would be immersed in an electric field of about 10 kV/m but the electric field induced inside the body would only be around 0.1 V/m – this is considered negligible in terms of any cellular effects.

With magnetic fields on the other hand, the body offers no reduction of the magnetic field so the full field penetrates the body unperturbed and can induce significant electric fields inside the body. It is also known that animals are sensitive to magnetic fields and that birds use the earth's geomagnetic field for navigation. There is even long standing folklore that people sleep better if they align their bodies parallel to the geomagnetic field, that is, by sleeping along the north south axis rather than east west. This would imply that scientists working in Antarctica should sleep standing up and the Inuit should sleep inverted on their heads. Curiously enough, sleeping penguins seem to have woken up to this aspect of alignment with the geomagnetic field but not so hibernating polar bears!

Safe Levels

Before discussing safe levels, it is useful to know a few technical points about magnetic fields and some relative magnitudes. The unit for the magnetic flux density is the Tesla (named after the same somewhat eccentric scientist as the Tesla cars). The average strength of the earth's stationary magnetic field at ground level is around 50 μ T (microtesla – that is one millionth of a Tesla). Perhaps the strongest magnetic field that people will come across is that used in Magnetic Resonance

Imaging (MRI) machines. The typical value is around 1.5 T but can vary from about 0.5 T to 7 T depending on the machine type.

Magnetic fields arise from electric current flows so anyone who has electricity connected to their house or operates electrical machinery will move in a sea of magnetic fields. The magnetic fields decay in strength with distance from the current source.

To date there have been no definitive studies or tests that directly link low frequency magnetic field strengths to any adverse health effects. There are some studies that show a possible link between persistent exposure to magnetic fields and childhood leukaemia but no causal mechanism has been determined. PPCG volunteers will be relieved to know that all the studies on the effects of magnetic fields on Alzheimer's disease have yielded a null result.

Nevertheless, since some cells carry paramagnetic molecules there are mechanisms by which the body can detect and be influenced by magnetic fields so levels have been set which are considered safe for the general public. In general, it is considered that magnetic field levels below the geomagnetic field of 50 μT are unlikely to be of any biological significance although it is possible that some paramagnetic cells may respond to magnetic fields as low as 5 μT which is often set as the safe limit.

Mapping Magnetic Fields in Anstead

The maximum magnetic fields were measured at approximately 10 m intervals from the edge of the Fig Garden to the information signs in the Native Lime area. The time at which the measurement is taken can affect the readings as the magnetic fields measured depend on the current flowing in the overhead wires. This current can vary from day to day and at the time of day. The magnetic fields are not influenced by the voltage level but can vary depending on the physical arrangement of the three wires. The magnetic field strength also depends on orientation and height above the ground so measurements were taken at around head height.

The maximum magnetic field was measured at around 1.5 μT just under the HV power lines. This had dropped to around 0.3 μT at the Fig Garden and to 0.2 μT at the signs in the Native Lime area and then to negligible levels past that.

Fig 1 shows a plot of the magnetic field from the Fig Garden to the native Lime area. The urchin in the foreground illustrates the measurement technique of counting the number of magnetic lines of force tripped over at any given point!

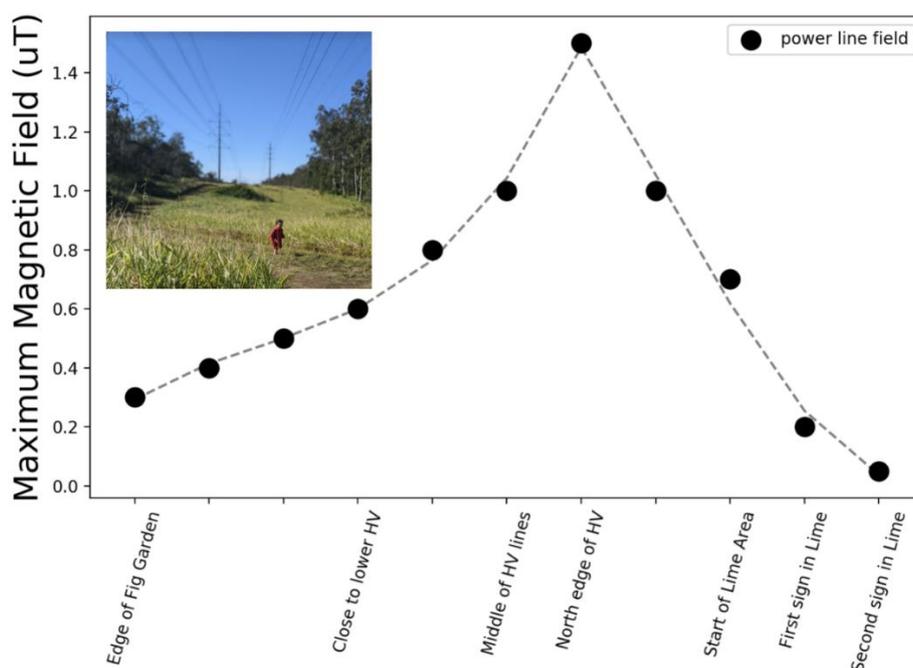


Figure 1

Since there was no information on the current flowing in the wires at the time (approximately noon) the measurements were taken, there is no independent verification of the values measured. However, USA and UK data on 500 KV lines supplying moderately heavy currents of several thousand amperes indicate that magnetic field levels of around 1-2 μT at about 30 m from the power lines are typical. The maximum value measured at about 20 m from the Anstead HV line was 1.5 μT so the data would appear to be consistent with HV power lines in general.

The plot in Figure 2 shows that the magnetic field is very much less than the geomagnetic field at all points and shows the dual power line network.

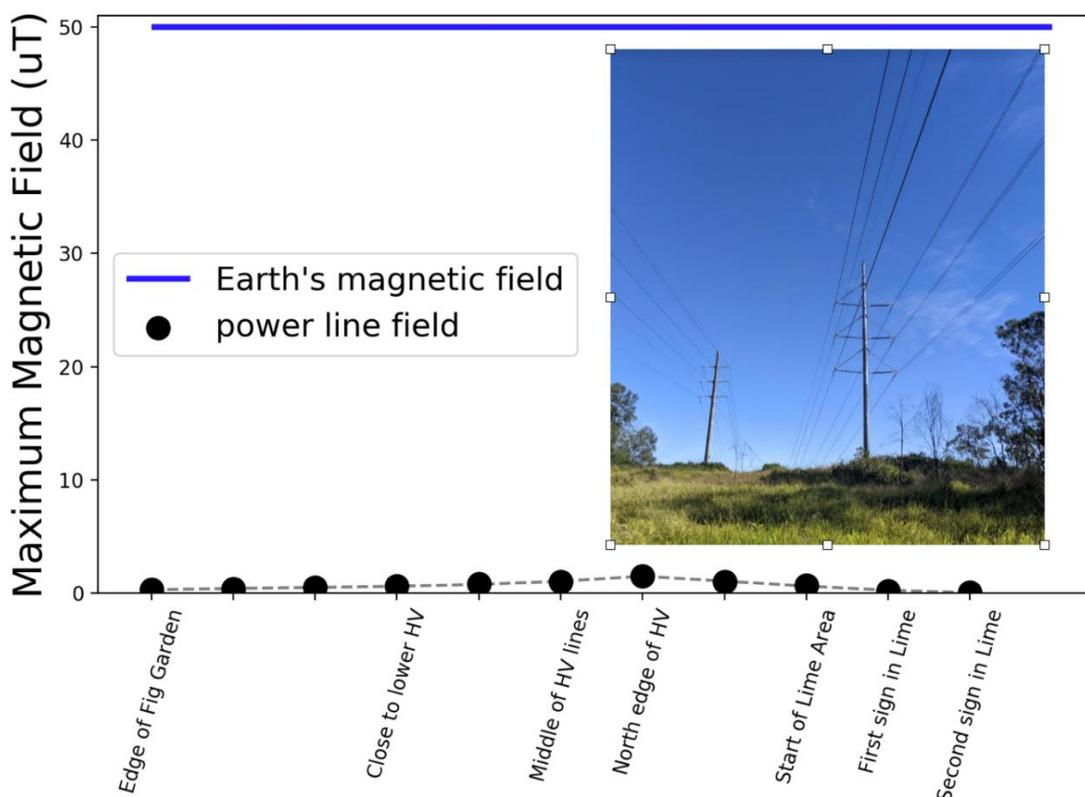


Figure 2

Conclusion

Within the Fig Tree and Native Lime areas, the magnetic fields from the HV power lines are small and of the same order as that in the typical household due to current flows in the house wiring and electrical appliances. Indeed the magnetic fields close to appliances such as kitchen mixers, hair dryers, induction cook tops, etc are very much higher than those due to the Anstead HV power lines in PPCG working areas. If one wishes to avoid the maximum magnetic field areas in Anstead then the advice is to not stand directly under the HV power lines and if you wish to loiter there then do so as close to the ground as possible!

Weed in the Western Suburbs – Collaboration to Eradicate?

Justin Watson

Following recent discussions with members from local groups and local government I send this email to see if the local environmental community groups have proposed any measures to combat the weed *Dyschoriste* or butterfly heaven (*Dyschoriste depressa*) which has/is invading the grassed areas, parks and reserves of the western suburbs. It is not a listed/declared weed but the impact is rather obvious and most concerning.

This weed has all but consumed open space areas, converting grasslands/parks to weed cover and is also invading bushland reserves.

It is spread via contractor/slashing and there seems no intention or means to halt the spread. Council have no washdown policies or measures to eradicate this weed as far as I am aware.

While my personal interest might be the protection of conservation areas, this weed will no doubt convert sports fields to weed fields in no time and I am sure this won't please many others.

Perhaps with some collaboration we (western suburbs conservation minded organisations) may be able to force Council to undertake better management of machinery used in open space areas and importantly implement a control programme to eradicate infestations.

If there are programmes in place that is great and I would be interested to hear what works, otherwise I would be happy to co-ordinate some form of correspondence or approach to Council if it is agreed this weed needs to be urgently addressed.

Jim William's response:-

Within the Anstead Bushland Reserve, *Dyschoriste depressa* has become common in areas that are frequented by people and machinery. Outside these areas, other species of weed are dominant. One practice that is virtually guaranteed to spread *D. depressa* further into the bush is removing weed that abuts footpaths and tracks. Existing weed that grows along these edges can be viewed as both least vulnerable and most valuable.

Least vulnerable Weed growing along the junction of a track and bush is least vulnerable to being permanently controlled by humans. The reasons are fairly obvious. The weed has (simplistically) 50% less competition for light, nutrients and moisture because the track or pathway is a void. If these boundaries are removed (whipper snipped/poisoned) then the new "boundary" moves further into the bush. This in turn creates less competition for weed growth further into the bush. The weed has now been given greater advantages for growth deeper into the bush.

Most valuable Weed growing along the junction between track and bush is most valuable in providing a protective barrier behind which naturally occurring plants may survive. Any surviving ground dwelling native plants have managed to find a way to survive, in the presence of the existing weed. If weed is to be removed it needs to begin deep within the bush and natives allowed to regenerate outwards and gradually "attack" the weed by a gradual change of balance where the advantage of growth is placed back in favour of the natives and removed from the weed. If the weed that forms the boundary between a track or pathway is removed the protection they afforded the surviving natives has been removed.

Management When a new weed has been introduced the objective must initially surely be to keep it out of bush areas where the weed does not exist. Machinery (mowing, whipper snipping) throws weed seed upwards and outwards. If the existing weed barrier between tracks or pathways and bush is not there then the result is very obvious, this new weed will penetrate further into the bush. It is critical that the barrier of existing weed along the edge of pathways and tracks is not compromised. Further to this, removal of weed seed and plant parts from machinery both before and after use would help to contain the spread.

Your.Say Brisbane

The Community Conservation Partnership Programs – Creek Catchments, Habitat Brisbane and Wildlife Conservation Partnerships is now live on the interactive Your.Say Brisbane platform. These pages hold numerous resources – factsheets, templates, news – as well as provide tools for you to use to tell us your ideas, share stories and wisdom and much more.

If you haven't registered for access already, register with Your.Say Brisbane. Once you are registered, please [email us](#) and let us know which programs you are a part of – Creek Catchment and/or Habitat Brisbane and/or Wildlife Conservation Partnerships.

Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count

Jutta Godwin

First season project completed

The first season has been completed, and the Brisbane City Council grant been acquitted with congratulations to an "extremely successful project". As set out, we were able to engage across age and knowledge levels, and raise the profile of butterflies (and at the same time other invertebrates) in our city, and highlight the importance of environmental protection.

The surveys resulted in records of 94 local butterflies (out of ca. 160).

Where to now?

There is general consensus to continue Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count to engage and educate Brisbane's community on environmental issues through the project, and to assess our butterfly populations.

Current areas of discussion, development and/or action are:

- **Booklets** for local primary schools and others doing environmental education have only partially been distributed.
- **Pamphlets** have proven to be immensely popular and an effective engagement tool. We are currently awaiting quotes for a reprint.
- **Website** development. This is under investigation. A dedicated website for the project would raise the profile and allow for more possibilities to provide resources and up-to-date information on BBBC activities.
- **Facebook**. To continue and to build social media presence.
- **Cooperation with others**
 - Discussions were had with Butterfly and Other Invertebrates Club (BOIC).
 - BBBC will be put forward again to Entomological Society of Queensland to seek support
- **Future surveys**
 - All catchment groups are asked to look at their habitat types and locations where they would like to either repeat or add locations, or choose different locations
 - General Land Manager permits are currently sought from BCC.
 - A special permit for Boondall Wetlands is current.
 - A special permit for Moggill Conservation Reserve is sought (State Gov).
 - BCC's Land for Wildlife Officers are currently putting recommendations forward for inclusion in surveys. Information will be provided to the relevant catchment groups.
 - Surveys in selected sites will start as early as August/September to capture HesperIIDae many of which eluded us during the last survey.
 - Field support during as many surveys as possible wanted and partly depending on funding
- **Ecology Walks** are intended to continue in N, E, W, S parts of Brisbane.
- **Workshops** (Webinars if Covid requires it) are intended
- **Talks** about Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count where wanted.....
- **Displays**. Use the opportunity at as many events as possible.
 - Have inquired with Native Plants Queensland for a stall at their plant sales event at the Belmont Rifle Range.
 - October: Plantapalooza at Brisbane Markets, Rocklea
- **Funding**. Not secured yet! While we have some funding through reimbursements donated back to the project, this will not be enough to cover field support, workshops and much of the other items. We are now actively seeking funding sources and sponsorships to secure activities.

If you have questions, suggestions, email or contact me at butterfly@brisbanecatchments.org.au or on 0407 583 441.
