



Streamlines

Newsletter of the Pullen Pullen Catchments Group Inc.

February 2022

Welcome to the first issue of Streamlines for 2022. It is a very varied issue once again with a wide range of topics discussed.

First is an article on the Collared Delma, a vulnerable legless lizard found in Anstead Bushland Reserve, and a project designed to increase the availability of suitable habitat to improve its chances of survival.

Then a member alerted me to changes in Brisbane City Council policy which now allows residents to develop gardens on their verges (whatever happened to nature strips?) so I've extracted information from BCC websites relating to such gardens. Make sure you check out the full details if you plan to go ahead developing your own verge.

This is followed by two articles on Fungi. The first one identifies mysterious structures unearthed by a member when planting his verge. Sorry, Jim, no truffles! The second features fungi photographed by member Margaret O'Grady in Lamington National Park, including a beautiful bioluminescent species.

Next, we have a review of a book about some of the organisms that have been introduced into Australia and become feral to varying extents. Makes interesting reading.

Finally, a member at a Working Bee asked how to distinguish between Native Senna and Easter Cassia which both have similar bright yellow, open flowers. A summary of their differences appears on p. 8.

All members are welcome to submit articles to Streamlines via helian@pretirementresorts.com.au. The deadline for the next issue is 15th May 2022.

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.

- 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.

Working Bees

Anstead Bushland Reserve – 1st Sunday of the month, 8.30 – 11 am (April-September), 7 – 9.30 am (October-March)
Pullenvale Forest Park – 2nd Sunday of the month, 8.30 – 11 am (April-September), 7.30 – 9.30 am (October-March)

Tools, gloves, etc are provided at Working Bees. Just wear sturdy boots and sunsafe clothing 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 Gillian reported that Friends of Anstead Bushland (FOAB) will begin the year by reviewing the condition of pegged sites after the summer break and will proceed in these areas as outlined in the Site Plan. **Working Bees take place on the first Sunday of each month commencing at 7 am.**

A few small changes have been made to the Site Plan in response to requests from BCC and the schedule of bushcare sessions has been expanded along with the addition of butterfly surveys in February, April and September.

A joint application with Kholo Creek Catchment Group for funding from the federal government's *Threatened Species Strategy Action Plan – Priority Species Grants* to support enhancement of Collared Delma habitat (see p. 4) was submitted on 13 December 2021. The outcome is still unknown.

A tray of dianella seedlings received from Chris de Jong has been stored at the Moggill School nursery (thanks to Karen) and can be used as the committee sees fit. Some could be planted in and around the Fig Tree Garden in ABR at our planned tree planting days or regular bushcare sessions in 2022. Chris de Jong also has seedlings of other plants, including trees, and has offered to contribute these on request.

Once the website changes (see below) have been finalised, work will continue on updating the ABR brochure.

The Reserve Café will put up copies of our bushcare morning posters and will allow us to put up a banner on their fence on the weekends when bushcare sessions will be held. John has also printed copies of the posters and arranged to have them put up in several locations.

Pullenvale Forest Park Simon Fox has returned to supervise this area. He has indicated that the area is too big for our group to look after and has suggested that PPCG focuses on the area where new plantings were carried out last year. Contractors will be engaged as needed to manage the rest of the Park. Deer and invasive vines continue to be the biggest problems and bigger guards are needed to protect plants from deer damage. **Working Bees take place on the second Sunday of each month commencing at 7.30 am.**

Airlie Road Park Mowing and weeding around trees continued.

Moggill State School Nursery Project Karen Roberts fixed the watering system and assisted with the rearranging the sprinklers. The watering system is now fully automatic and the nursery can accommodate another 50 or so plants giving ~ 150 plants in total. Currently ~ 40 such plants are large enough for distribution.

In principle agreement has been reached with Andrew Wilson from MCCG Nursery to recycle larger plants from the School nursery through the MCCG nursery. These will be made available for the first Monday of each month which is the usual time that the MCCG nursery is open for MCCG and PPCG members to collect plants.

A system for Moggill School parents to pick up plants is under review.

Website and Facebook Page Emma is currently implementing changes that update information on activities within the catchment and adding images to a page on ABR and FOAB's application of the Bradley Method. Emma is happy to make any changes needed – just let her know what is required. It was pointed out that membership payments or donations need to be able to be made through the website.

Wildlife Irene has recently begun trialling a new project suitable for children interested in working with animals. Children wanting hands-on experience with animals are being trained to reunite baby birds found separated from their parents, with their parents. More information is available from Irene on 0409 026 883.

Improving Habitat for the Vulnerable Collared Delma (*Delma torquata*)

The Collared Delma or Adorned Delma (*Delma torquata*) is the smallest species of legless lizard in Australia. Being legless, Collared Delmas are often mistaken for snakes. Their bodies are brown, their tails bluish-grey and their heads black with distinctive cream/yellow rings around their heads and necks. They range in length from 150-200 mm. They are active during the day, foraging and hunting for small insects and spiders and breed during the summer.



Collared Delma (Queensland Museum photo)

Collared Delmas are distributed mainly across south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales in eucalypt dominated woodlands and open forests where they are associated with rocky outcrops with native grass ground cover and abundant leaf litter. Their population is fragmented with inland and coastal components. The inland populations occur in very specific locations between the Bunya Mountains and Millmerran. Surprisingly, coastal populations have been found in western Brisbane suburbs including, Kenmore, Pinjarra Hills and Anstead. Populations have been observed in Anstead Bushland Reserve over a number of years.

Collared Delmas are listed as 'Vulnerable' under the state *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and the national *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and are currently included among the Australian government's 100 Priority Species for threatened species recovery actions. Their survival is threatened by human activities such as land clearing, urbanisation, use of agricultural chemicals and habitat degradation as well as natural phenomena such as feral cats and foxes, fire and weed invasion.

In Anstead Bushland Reserve, the widespread, invasive weed Creeping Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*) is thought to have significantly reduced habitat for the Collared Delma over recent decades. Enhancement of habitat in the Reserve needs to focus on retarding this weed through measures that can be applied without harming vulnerable Collared Delma populations. These include sustainable and non-toxic targeted weed control with supplementary planting of protective plants in selected areas. Suitable species for supplementary planting include Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*), Barbed-wire grass (*Cymbogogon refractus*) and local varieties of Lomandra (all species that occur within the Reserve naturally). A staged approach would be required to minimise disruption to the natural lifecycle of the species.

The Friends of Anstead Bushland have incorporated these goals into their current bush regeneration projects in the Reserve. Their efforts will be guided by advice from local specialists who have been monitoring populations and attempting to improve Collared Delma habitat within the Reserve over a sustained period. FOAB, in collaboration with the adjoining Kholo Creek Catchment Group, also hopes to gain funding to expand efforts to protect habitat for the Collared Delma throughout the wider Pullen Pullen and Kholo Creek catchment areas.

Information compiled from a number of sources.

Gardening on the Verge

A street verge is the area of public land located between a property boundary and the adjacent road kerb. The verge provides access from the street to private and public properties. It also accommodates above and below-ground public service utilities such as postal service, lighting, power, water, sewerage, gas, telephone and optic fibre cables.

Verge gardens beautify local streets and show pride in our neighbourhood. Brisbane City Council has developed Verge Garden Guidelines to help residents who are interested in establishing a verge garden to self-assess their compliance with Council requirements. The guidelines support Council's vision of a clean, green city that protects and supports our subtropical environment by sustainably managing and caring for our natural environment and resources.

These guidelines apply to verge gardens at properties that are identified as a "Residential zone" within the Brisbane City Plan 2014 and are between the property boundary and the road kerb (allowing a minimum width of 1.2 metres for pedestrian access).

You do not need to apply for permission to install a verge garden but make sure your plan complies with the checklist included in the Council guidelines to ensure it will not impact on the safety of the community, the environment and surrounding infrastructure. If your proposed verge garden meets the requirements of this checklist, then you may proceed to plant. If you are not able to comply with the requirements of these guidelines, you will not be able to establish a verge garden.

The homeowner is responsible for the verge gardens adjacent to their property. While verge gardens are planted in public spaces, priority must always be given to maintenance and access for utilities services such as pedestrian movement, water and sewerage, power, gas, telephones, optic fibre cables. If adequate access is not provided, householders may be asked to remove or make changes to their garden. Council reserves the right at any time to remove any verge garden and landscaping to perform works that are required to manage any service or infrastructure or that does not comply with this guideline

To ensure the protection of any underground public utility services such as water and electricity, you should call 'Dial Before You Dig' on 1100 (during business hours) or visit their website at www.1100.com.au prior to gardening. In the event that damage is caused to public utility services due to gardening activities, this must be reported to the appropriate authority as soon as possible and repaired at the property owner's expense.

In choosing plant and garden bed location, consideration should also be given to:

- visibility of motorists using the road, and those entering or exiting a residential driveway
- maintaining adequate distance from above-ground utilities such as electricity pillars, street lights, and telecommunication cables
- access to post boxes (mailboxes) allowing space between your verge garden and the edge of the footpath (if established) for footpath maintenance
- adequate distance must be maintained between the kerb and the edge of the verge garden at all times to allow access from vehicles to an established footpath or an unestablished pedestrian path.

Organic mulching is permitted and should be flush with the footpath or grass area. The use of non-organic materials such as loose gravel, crushed brick or other stone aggregate is not permitted. The use of any hard landscaping materials or irrigation systems is also not permitted. The use of garden structures such as wood

planter boxes is not supported by Council. Should residents use such materials, Council will ask for their removal.

Residents are encouraged to use native or water-wise plants where possible. Council has a number of resources to help you select the right plant species and create a sustainable, water-wise garden. Please visit Council's website, www.brisbane.qld.gov.au and search the following options to find out more:

- Green Gardening Guide
- Native plant species for residents.

These lists include groundcovers, shrubs and edible plants. It's important to remember that the verge is a public space. If you plan on growing any edible plants, pedestrians passing by may harvest from your verge garden.

When planting species, height of the mature plant or plants must be taken into account to ensure there is no obstruction with the visibility of motorists using the road or exiting a residential driveway, and there is no potential for the species to grow into the power lines. It is also necessary to ensure the species will not create overhanging branches that might be a hazard for pedestrians. Residents are reminded that planting is at their own risk and you must consider the impacts of allergies, thorns and poisonous plants to residents, animals and surroundings.

Trees or tall shrubs must not be planted in verge gardens. Council is responsible for planting, removing and maintaining all street trees on the street verge. If you would like a street tree, please contact Council on 3403 8888.

Many attractive garden plants have a secret life as weeds in our bushland. There are more than 200 backyard beauties that become bushland bullies when they jump the garden fence. Once there, they smother and kill native plants, removing food and shelter for our wildlife. Residents can use Council's weed identification tool and Brisbane Invasive Species Management Plan for assistance. Both of these are available via Council's website.

Extracted from entries on the Brisbane City Council website.

Earth Balls

One of our members came across these structures when planting grasses on his verge recently. He reported that they 'appeared to be attached to a "runner" and were approximately 100mm down in dry soil that had been undisturbed for a minimum of 25yrs. Externally they appeared similar in shape and colour to "button mushrooms" and opened readily to reveal internal black spores when handled.'



The structures appear to be 'earth balls' as the fruiting structures of the fungus *Sclerotinia* (from the Greek for 'hard skin') are commonly known. The outer wall of the earth ball may be smooth or warty and is very tough and thick (hence the name!). When the earth ball is mature, the outer wall splits irregularly over its surface to reveal a powdery mass of dark spores. This fungus occurs across the world and is used in nurseries to promote the growth of tree seedlings.

Fungi in Southern Queensland Bushlands

Margaret O'Grady

Some time ago I wrote some articles about fungi found in the Anstead Bushland Reserve. This time I've photographed fungi further afield and these two spectacular specimens were found in the border ranges region of Southern Queensland.

Stereum ostrea

This colourful fungus is common throughout the Lamington National Park and other wet native forest areas of Southern Queensland. Its thin fan-shaped bracket with bright colour (bright orange to orange-brown) with light and dark coloured concentric bands, yellow under surface and leathery texture, make this fungus readily identifiable. It grows on hardwood tree bark and some research has been done into its antibacterial properties but no clear cut result was reported.

Ghost Fungus (*Omphalotus nidiformis*)

This intriguing fungus is bioluminescent and was photographed in the Lamington National Park. It grows on a wide variety of dead or dying trees and is poisonous to humans. The luminescence is only visible in low light and the fungus looks white and very plain during the day. The luminescence is due to an enzyme called luciferase, acting upon a compound called luciferin, leading to the emission of light much as fireflies do. Scientists have come up with two possible theories as to why some fungi produce light but neither have been proven. The first theory is that the fungi use the light to lure insects. The second theory is the light could be an accidental by-product of metabolism and in this case the light production has no benefits at all for the fungi.



Stereum ostrea



Omphalotus nidiformis

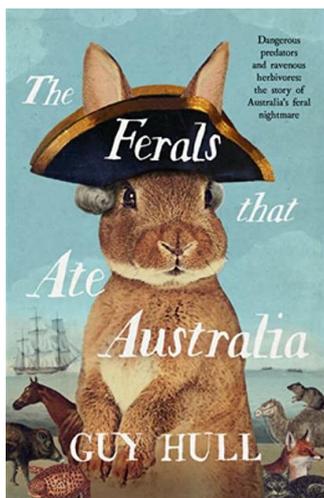
While we're on the subject of fungi, I stumbled upon what looks to be a very useful publication from the Wolston and Centenary Catchments. It's 'A little Field Guide to West Brisbane Fungi' by Megan Prance and Sapphire McMullan-Fisher. It is the result of a survey in 2014 by WaCC of an area bounded by the Brisbane River, Oxley Creek and the Logan Motorway. It is aimed at beginners to show some of the diversity and the common groups of the local macrofungi. It's ideal in that it's relatively local and there are not an overwhelming number of fungi illustrated. I was able to download it from the web. Editor

'The Ferals that Ate Australia'

The 'Ferals that Ate Australia' (published 2021) by Guy Hull, author of 'The Dogs that Made Australia', continues the story told in the book 'They all Ran Wild' written by Eric Rolls and published in 1969. Since that time, the introduction of new invaders and developments in managing ferals has changed the situation.

The author claims that 'the animals that feral-bombed Australia are like the uninvited visitors who saw the light on, dropped in, made themselves at home, cleaned out the fridge and never left.' He begins with the arrival of the dingo, follows through with the animals that arrived with the First Fleet and then the activities of the Acclimatisation Societies that introduced animals to make Australia seem more English and/or for the

upper classes to hunt. He then moves on to newer threats including pet species brought into the country illegally.



There are the usual suspects – rabbits, rats, mice, goats, pigs, foxes, camels, donkeys, carp – and some whose stories are less well known – English songbirds, game birds, alpacas, buffalo, ostriches. Cane toads, of course, rate a chapter and plants are not totally forgotten with a chapter on Prickly Pear. Some of the impacts of these introductions on the environment are described.

The role of viruses in managing ferals is discussed, especially in relation to rabbits with a chapter devoted to the Myxoma virus and to Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease (calicivirus). The author does not avoid the ethical issues associated with the destruction of ferals and comments on the need for an integrated, rather than a piecemeal, approach.

Native Senna v. Easter Cassia

Both these plants have open flowers with five bright yellow petals and a number of prominent curved stamens as well as smaller, less well-defined structures in the centre of the flower. They also have leaves made up of several leaflets. However, they can be distinguished on the basis of their leaf colour, leaflet shape and pod shape and size.

Native Senna <i>Cassia artemisoides</i>	Easter cassia <i>Cassia pendula var. glabrata</i>
Leaves grey-green, covered with short hairs	Leaves dark green, hairless
Leaflets 1-8 pairs, cylindrical, 10-40 mm long, 2-3 mm wide	Leaflets 3-6 pairs, oval to egg-shaped with rounded tips, 10-50 mm long, 5-20 mm wide, leaflets closer to stem usually smaller
Pods flat, green aging to dark brown, 40-80 mm long, 10 mm wide	Pods cylindrical, hang downwards, green aging to pale brown, 100-200 mm long, 6-12 mm wide, contain 5-40 black seeds, often have irregular constrictions



Photo: Australian Plants NSW



Photo: Lyle Radford