



QNC NEWS

Newsletter of The
QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB INC.

No. 339 July-August 2018

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www.qnc.org.au

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Symmopus Skipper *Trapezites symmopus*
Pottsville. Photo: Barney Hines ID: John Moss



A yellow Bolete fungi, probably of the genus
Pulveroboletus possibly of the species *ravenelii*. The
fungi is still immature and hence the veil. Pottsville.
Photo: Barney Hines ID: Lil Spadiger

PROGRAMME

General Meetings:

July 16	Nigel Fechner <i>Fungal topic to be advised</i>
August 20	Roger Guo <i>The biology and distribution of Australian lungfish in Queensland</i>

Excursions:

June 29 – July 3	Upper Mary River
July 8	Anstead Bushland Reserve
July 14	Coolum Beach
August 8	Ford Road Conservation Reserve, Sheldon
August 12	Moggill Regional Park
September 16-30	Long Excursion 2018
	Binya National Park and Bowra Sanctuary

CLUB CONTACT DETAILS

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Deadline for News items – 15th August for Sept-Oct 2018.

The Queensland Naturalist is published twice per year, send articles to the Editor:

Dr. Peter Woodall at journal@qnc.org.au

If you receive a paper copy of the newsletter, switch to receive the coloured email edition by contacting Mike (treasurer@qnc.org.au) to update your details.

COUNCIL NEWS

Subscription Reminder

This is a reminder that Subscriptions for 2019 are due on 1 July 2018. Options for payment are shown on the back page of the QNC News.

Meeting Venue

The QNC Council is investigating venues for our monthly General Meetings. We are currently hiring the Toowong Uniting Church Hall for meetings as well as hiring container storage for our Library, books and equipment. If any members know of a suitable venue for our monthly meetings where there is also storage space for the equivalent of 4 double door cupboards, please advise Judy (secretary@qnc.org.au) or phone 0402 236 359.

Assistant Secretary (Minutes Secretary) is needed!

Can you help? If so, please contact the President or other member of Council.

New Members

We always welcome new members, encourage your friends, family and colleagues to join us in appreciating, learning and sharing our natural history experiences.

Facebook

Follow our Facebook page for titbits about the natural world, to find out what we've been up to and for information on upcoming events. Share our page with your friends and families and contact Leith (librarian@qnc.org.au) if you have information we could post. You do not have to be a member of Facebook to see what we publish, and you don't have to divulge any private information.

GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held between February and November on the third Monday of the month from 7:30 PM at the Toowong Uniting Church Hall, 82 Sherwood Road, Toowong. This location is conveniently reached by public transport and is approximately 200 m from Toowong Village Shopping Centre, Toowong Railway Station and the main bus stops. Street parking is available near the church and there is an off-street parking area on the river side of the church (ignore the permit required sign). Parking at Toowong Village Shopping Centre is free for entry after 6:00 PM.

LIBRARY CUPBOARD

Journals and newsletters will be on display and new books will be brought to General Meetings. However, as the library cupboard is not available at the Toowong Uniting Church Hall, books can be borrowed by contacting Leith (librarian@qnc.org.au) prior to the meeting. The library catalogue can be found on the QNC website at http://www.qnc.org.au/Library/QNC_LibraryCatalogue.pdf.

DIGITAL EXHIBITS AT GENERAL MEETINGS

Do you have something to share at a General Meeting? If your exhibit requires the projector, please arrive by 7:15 PM and liaise with the Lanternist to upload your PowerPoint or jpeg image. We would also love to see your exhibit in the QNC News and online, please see the Exhibits section of this newsletter.

ROSTER FOR GENERAL MEETINGS

Our General Meetings are warm and welcoming thanks to the generous help of a few volunteers who provide reception and supper duties. Please consider nominating for the General Meeting Roster by signing up at a meeting or emailing your availability and preferred task to Judy (secretary@qnc.org.au).

July 16 Reception: Could this be you?

Supper Duties: Could this be you?

August 20 Reception: Could this be you?

Supper Duties: Could this be you?

Thank you to the volunteers at the May and June General Meetings, including Coral Reichman, Joseph Reichman, Marjorie Jahnke, James Hansen, Mike Anderson, Barbara Braddock, Cathryn Duffy and all those who brought plates of food and assisted with the room set up and clean up.

COMING UP

Monday 16 July

Nigel Fechner, Queensland Herbarium

Fungal topic to be advised – please check the website for updates

Monday 20 August

Roger Guo

The biology and distribution of Australian lungfish in Queensland

Dr. Roger Guo was born in Northern China and studied Marine Biology at the Ocean University of Qingdao. In 1989, he went to Kiwi Land to study fish larvae in the Cook Strait at the New Zealand Oceanographic Institute.

After 12 months in windy Wellington, Roger came to Queens Land to carry out further study of osmoregulation in Australian freshwater fish for his PhD. Since graduating, Roger has spent most of his time in business and has not been involved with fish in his career until recently when he bought an Australian lungfish business in 2009. Since then, Roger has bred and exported Australian lungfish to more than 15 countries worldwide.

Roger loves gardens and spends his spare time creating a Chinese garden in Bellbowrie where his fish business is also located.

MEETING REPORTS

General Meeting: 21 May

Dr Darryn Schneider presented a thoughtful and detailed account of The Life of E.J. “Kalbar” Smith as this year’s C.T. White Memorial Lecture.

Ernest Smith was born in England in 1877 and emigrated to Australia with his family in 1887. Though clever at school, he had to forego schooling opportunities and, as a young plumber, found himself in the pioneering Fassifern district, and eventually the township of Kalbar.

Encouraged by a radio broadcast by The State Botanist C.T. White in the 1930s, he started studying plants and with further encouragement, through correspondence with C.T. White, went on to become an accomplished amateur naturalist and local historian. Ernest’s connection to the Queensland Naturalists started in 1945. He was an active member of the Queensland Naturalists’ Club and left a legacy of dozens of articles published in the Fassifern Guardian and The Queensland Naturalist. The Club’s 1953/1954 annual report described Ernest as one of the “keenest” members exhibiting specimens at evening meetings. Many of his natural history specimens were sent to, and survive in, major institutional collections.

Dr Darryn Schneider is a physicist who grew up on a dairy farm outside Kalbar and heard about Ernest Smith from his grandfather, who was a friend of Ernest. His interest grew progressively from an inquiry of Barry Jahnke about a Rhinoceros Beetle his grandfather had given Ernest to studying Ernest’s articles written for the Fassifern Guardian and then on to finding out more and more about this amazing character and accomplished citizen scientist.

General Meeting: 18 June

Professor Darryl Jones, a behavioural ecologist at Griffith University, presented an entertaining and thought provoking talk entitled Food, fights and frights: Wildlife making it in the big city.

Darryl started by remembering how discouraging many had been about his choice of research into urban wildlife. He pointed out that since 27 May 2007, more people in the world were living in cities than in rural settings and hence most wildlife-human interactions take place in urban surrounds. While most wildlife is decimated by urbanisation, with loss of 90% of vertebrate species, there can be a positive side for some animals. For example, the densest population of peregrine falcons in the world now inhabits New York City. The bird's propensity for nesting on cliffs (cf tall buildings) and hunting birds on the wing has resulted in its being pre-adapted to living in cities. Other city dwelling birds, such as the house sparrow, once so prevalent in major cities, has almost disappeared worldwide (except for NZ) within 30 years. The causes for this are unknown but are thought to relate to the major loss of insects in cities resulting in an inability to rear young.

Urbanisation in Australia and the move towards planting heavy nectar-producing native plants and street trees has had unpredicted consequences for birds. Rainbow lorikeets were uncommon in Brisbane until recently but are now the most abundant bird species in Brisbane and across Australia. They now have out-competed the smaller scaly-breasted lorikeets, whose populations have reduced simultaneously. The second most common bird in Brisbane, the noisy miner, is an aggressive bird which tolerates no smaller birds in its territory and therefore massive loss of diversity. The Torresian crow, which in the lifetime of the QNC was a rare sighting in Brisbane, is now the third most common and has recently taken up a new habit nesting on high rise buildings and expressing hostility towards human residents seen through the glass walls and later targeted outside! Darryl gave an amusing illustrated example of this from his own experience at Nathan and it appears that the habit has been rapidly adopted in many places possibly due to increased safety for nestlings compared to tree nests.

Darryl spoke about the massive global industry of wild bird feeding, now worth 4 trillion dollars annually! Rates of bird-feeding in countries such as the UK and USA, where the national bird societies actively encourage the habit, fall between 30-78% of the population but feeding rates in Australia, the only country to actively discourage bird feeding, are surprisingly similar. Darryl pointed out that although the food offered is often not a natural part of the birds' diet, e.g. exotic seeds and mealworms, it does result in increased fertility in bird populations – earlier breeding, more attempts, higher fledging rates. Contrary to popular perception, it seems that the food offered is usually supplementary rather than essential, with birds continuing to forage for natural food for the bulk of their intake. Thus, fear of inducing dependence is ill-founded.

Darryl's conclusion was that the popularity of wild bird feeding in Australia, as elsewhere in the world, is the most common interaction between wildlife and humans, and so should be fostered with some guiding principles rather than discouraged.

EXHIBITS

Do you have some natural history observations to share? Exhibits may be shared at General Meetings and through our website, social media and newsletter.

If you can bring your exhibit to a General Meeting, the exhibit may be in physical (e.g. specimens, books) or digital (e.g. images, videos) format. If your exhibit requires the projector, please arrive by 7:15 PM and liaise with the Lanternist to upload your PowerPoint or jpeg image.

If you are unable to attend General Meetings, and we also ask this of Meeting exhibitors, please send photos and an accompanying description to:

- The Club website –David (web@qnc.org.au)
- Our Facebook page – Leith (facebook@qnc.org.au)
- The QNC News – May-Le (news@qnc.org.au).

May Meeting Exhibits



Davidsonia pruriens



An E.J. Smith cuttings scrapbook



One of E.J. Smith's specimens: *Chamaesipho columna*

Joan Cribb presented leaves and fruit of the Davidson's plum or Ooray (*Davidsonia pruriens*). The tree is endemic to Australia and is widespread but never abundant in rainforests from north-eastern Queensland to north-eastern New South Wales. The species is known in cultivation and the fruits are sought after as a native food and used in jam and wine making.

Barry Jahnke brought along exhibits to complement the C.T. White Memorial Lecture: The Life of E.J. "Kalbar" Smith. These included one of E.J. Smith's cuttings scrapbooks and one of E.J. Smith's specimens: some honeycomb or column barnacles (*Chamaesipho columna*).

June Meeting Exhibits

Neil Fordyce showed a photo of 14 of a group of 24 wedge-tailed eagles he took at Deepwater. Apparently, large groups of these birds are not uncommon despite the recent spate of poisonings by farmers.

Harry Hines reported on a trip to Kroombit Tops National Park, showing photos taken by camera traps in the western part of the Park. Feral species such as pigs and cats featured but the real highlights were those of native animals such as swamp wallaby (*Wallabia bicolor*), echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*), fawn-footed melomys (*Melomys cervinipes*), mountain brushtail possum (*Trichosurus caninus*), common dunnart (*Sminthopsis murina*), Herbert's rock-wallaby (*Petrogale herberti*) and...northern quoll (*Dasyurus hallucatus*)! The five individuals photographed are a previously unknown population of a species whose populations have been decimated by cane toads.

Establishment of a captive breeding program for the critically endangered Kroombit tinkerfrog *Taudactylus pleione* – May 2018

The Department of Environment and Science's Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) have commenced a collaborative project to undertake captive breeding of the critically endangered Kroombit tinkerfrog *Taudactylus pleione*. This comes on the back of a successful captive breeding trial using the closely related Eungella tinkerfrog *T. liemi*, by Professor Jean-Marc Hero (formerly of Griffith University), Dr Ed Meyer (consultant ecologist) and Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.



A male Kroombit tinkerfrog, in the wild, Kroombit Tops National Park, Feb 2018. Photo: Ed Meyer



The partially gravid female Kroombit tinkerfrog at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, Apr 2018. Photo: Michael Vella

In early February 2018, Ed Meyer and Harry Hines, Senior Conservation Officer QPWS, undertook a field trip to Kroombit Tops National Park to collect a small number of tinkerfrogs for captive breeding. We focused our efforts on finding an adult female but were unable to locate one (due in part to the very wet, cold and windy conditions prevailing at this time). We did however locate and collect an indeterminate, possibly sub-adult female and an adult male on this trip. A subsequent collecting trip in March 2018, with Saskia Lafebre and Kimberly Revelly from Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS), Harry Hines of QPWS and Ben Revelly (a QPWS volunteer), resulted in the collection of a second indeterminate individual and a partially gravid adult female. Animals collected from the wild were carefully transported back to a dedicated husbandry facility at Currumbin within 48 hours of capture. They have all settled in to their new home and are eating well. We are hopeful that the adult female will develop a full complement of eggs over the coming months with a view to breeding in spring.

Amphibian chytridiomycosis, a fungal disease responsible for declines and disappearances of frogs across the globe, is a major threat to the tinkerfrog species both in the wild and in captivity. The preceding work with the captive population of *Eungella* tinkerfrogs at CWS, developed safe treatment protocols to rid adult and subadult tinkerfrogs of amphibian chytrid fungus. In keeping with these protocols, treatment of Kroombit tinkerfrogs for chytrid commenced in the field, 12 hours after capture. Pre-treatment chytrid infection status was assessed by carefully swabbing the flanks and ventral surfaces of the frogs and subsequent DNA analyses. After swabbing, each frog was treated with a 10 minute bath in an antifungal solution. This same treatment was repeated every 24 hours for 10 days after capture. Analysis of skin swabs of the frogs immediately post-treatment and in subsequent weeks, has shown that all four animals collected from the wild are now chytrid free.



A male Kroombit tinkerfrog, receiving its first treatment for amphibian chytridiomycosis (a 10 min bath in an antifungal solution), Kroombit Tops National Park, Feb 2018. Photo: Ed Meyer

Depending on the sex of the sub-adults collected in February/March, additional animals may be collected from the wild this spring. The Kroombit tinkerfrog husbandry team will regularly assess the progress of captive frogs and evaluate the need for additional animals as required. In the longer term, we hope to release captive bred animals back to the wild.

Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) helped finance this important project and have supported survey and monitoring of threatened frogs at Kroombit Tops over many years. Their ongoing support of this project and other conservation work at Kroombit Tops (in particular feral animal control) is critical to the continued survival of the Kroombit tinkerfrog. Other important contributors to this project include present and former staff of CWS, including Michael Vella, Saskia Lafebre, Natalie Hill and Matt Hingley. Department of Environment and Science staff (past and present) and numerous volunteers have also contributed over many years to our understanding of the distribution and abundance of the Kroombit tinkerfrog, its status, and the need for captive breeding. Thanks are also owed to the local QPWS staff for use of the barracks (warm, dry and mostly leech free!) and their ongoing efforts in controlling feral animals at Kroombit.

EXCURSIONS

Fees apply for weekend camps of \$2 per adult per night, plus other camping fees, if applicable.

Registration for all excursions is with the Leader or contact given.

Those participating in any Club activity do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept responsibility for any injury to themselves, however incurred. The Club or its officers cannot accept any liability or responsibility.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED TO LEAD EXCURSIONS

Do you know of a great place that other naturalists might enjoy exploring with you? We are looking for people to suggest excursion locations and for volunteer excursion leaders. If you are interested, contact Barney by email (excursion@qnc.org.au) or telephone: 07 3720 9414.

EXCURSION SIGN-ON SHEETS

The Club asks all people who attend excursions to sign an Attendance Sheet. This provides a record of your attendance in case it may ever be necessary to make an insurance claim. It also offers the option of recording your email address so that you can receive a species list from the excursion.

COMING UP

June 29 – July 3: Upper Mary River

Leaders: Brian and Grace Lowry Ph: 5435 0318.

This camp is a rescheduling of the Easter camp, which was unfortunately cancelled due to wet weather. We are taking advantage of the school holidays to make the camp extend beyond the weekend, so that most of the activities that were previously planned for Easter can go ahead. Thus, the camp will run from Saturday morning to the Tuesday morning, with the option of people arriving on Friday afternoon if they wish.

The camp will be held on the property of David and Jacky Lowry on the headwaters of the Mary River. The club has held successful camps here before, at Easter in 2007 and again for the May camp in 2009. It will be nice to return after a 9-year hiatus.

The property comprises 60 acres in the headwaters of the Mary River, with the young river forming one boundary. It is mostly under grazing. There is riparian rain forest along the river and in a tributary creek running through the property. Camping will be in a grassy paddock alongside the river. There are now distinct camping bays from David's planting of rainforest trees. We envisage the evening campfire to be again under giant *Waterhousia* trees beside the stream.

Access is suitable for conventional vehicles unless there is a major flood. The camp will use club toilets. Bore water of excellent quality will be laid on. Bring plenty of arthropod repellent or other anti-tick measures.

Several activities are envisioned including trips to new areas not previously visited. Some excursions will require vehicle trips away from the camp.

Directions:

Option 1. (Shorter and more scenic). Follow Glasshouse Mountains Highway about 16 km to the turnoff to Beerwah and Woodford. Zero the odometer and follow the Woodford/Kilcoy Road through Beerwah and Peachester. At 16.8 km take the right turn (Stanley River Road; sign says 'Maleny 20'). Follow road up to the plateau, pass turnoff to Bellthorpe on the left and soon after at 24.0 km look for a minor road on left named Postmans Track. Follow this down into the Mary River headwaters. Care! The road is sealed but narrow and very steep in places. Soon after reaching the valley floor, at 28.3km, look for QNC sign and turn off to the right. Follow QNC signs to the camping area.

Option 2. (via Maleny). From Maleny follow the Conondale - Kenilworth Road past the Witta turnoff and down from the plateau. Just before Conondale look for Aherns Road on the left (patch of *Paulonia* trees on the right).

Set odometer and follow this for 1.5 km and continue on Aherns road as it does a sharp right turn. At 8.8 km cross the upper Mary River. At 10.1 km look for QNC sign and turn off to the left.

Registration: Registration & further inquiries either by phone or email excursion@qnc.org.au with the subject 'Upper Mary River'.

July 8: Anstead Bushland Reserve, Part of the “Walking with Life: Explore Our Living Catchments” Series

Sunday 1:45 PM for 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Leader: Helen Schwencke Ph: 0423 127 492

Anstead Bushland Reserve is over 80 hectares. This is our second visit as we work our way down the Brisbane River. It is the site of revegetation work by the Anstead Bushcare Group which is part of the Pullen Pullen Catchments Group. It's a good bird watching site, so bring your binoculars. We will be meandering slowly, exploring the vegetation along the way, looking for butterflies and other insects. The walk will take us 750m to the lookout at the old Sugars Quarry site on the Brisbane River. Stone for roadworks and building was quarried there from the early 1900s.

There are picnic shelters and toilets. The tracks are graded and moderate.

For more information visit:

<http://www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au/default.asp>

<http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/environment-waste/natural-environment/bushland-parklands-wetlands/natural-areas/reserves-wetlands-parklands-forests/anstead-bushland-reserve>

Directions: Anstead Bushland Reserve, off Hawkesbury Rd, Anstead, off Mt Crosby Rd. Outbound on Mt Crosby Rd, turn left past a veterinary practice, the entrance is on the right 120m past the turn off.

Parking spaces are available though it can be a popular spot. The Google Maps reference is: -27.543162, 152.861900

Registration: Register by email: excursion@qnc.org.au with the subject: WWL Anstead Bushland Reserve 8/7/18, contact Helen Schwencke or via QNC's Meetup website: <http://www.meetup.com/Walking-with-Life-in-our-catchments-Nature-Excursions/events/222689351/> (become a member first)

July 14: Coolum Beach

Saturday 13:00. The low tide is at 14:44; tidal height 0.04 m

Leaders: Myriam Preker and Ian Lawn

Ph: 3374 0478 Email: myriam.preker@yahoo.com

Coolum Beach is located on the Sunshine coast and is exposed to the open ocean. Weather permitting, we will be exploring the rock platforms and the tidal pools.

What to bring: Sunblock; sunhat; sturdy footwear that can be used in water and that protects the ankles; reef-walking stick; windbreaker, if it is a windy day and perhaps a lunch to enjoy before we go out on the walk.



Directions: From Brisbane, drive north on the Bruce Highway. When you reach Sippy Downs, take the turn off to the Sunshine Motorway and follow it until you get to the Yandina Coolum Road turn off then continue along this road until it intersects with David Low Way. Then turn right and proceed south to the parking bays between Mona Vista Crescent and Scrub Road.

Registration: Please register as this is an exposed, ocean-facing site and if wave and or weather conditions are unfavourable, the excursion may need to be postponed or amended. Register by email to excursion@qnc.org.au or contact Myriam and Ian.

August 12: Moggill Regional Park, Part of the “Walking with Life: Explore Our Living Catchments” Series

Sunday 1:45 PM for 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Leader: Helen Schwencke Ph: 0423 127 492

Moggill Regional Park includes 491 ha of the D'Aguilar Range bushland corridor. This entrance to the park includes diverse vine forests. We will be exploring the St Peters Downfall Break area which drains into Pullen Creek, and is along different tracks from our first visit.

The tracks are defined, and one section is steep, with some loose stones (only for a few meters). There are no toilets and no drinking water on site. Bring a hat, sunscreen, water, a bit of food perhaps, and your binoculars, plus camera and wear sturdy footwear. We will meet at the Mill Road gate to the park at 1:45pm for a 2:00pm start and finish by 4pm.

For more information see: <http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/parks/moggill/pdf/moggill-rp-map.pdf>

Directions: Moggill Regional Park, Mill Rd entrance, Mill Rd, Pullenvale. Park beside the road near the Mill road entrance to Moggill Regional Park, but not directly in front of the access gate (we will meet up just on the park side of that gate). The gate is about 800m along Mill Rd from the turn off from Grandview Rd.

Registration: Register by email: excursion@qnc.org.au with the subject WWL Mill Rd Moggill Regional Park or through QNC's Meetup website: <http://www.meetup.com/Walking-with-Life-in-our-catchments-Nature-Excursions> (become a member first)

August 15: Ford Road Conservation Reserve, Sheldon

Ekka Wednesday 10:00 start

Leader: Susan Nelles Ph: 0487 202 101

A short walk from the road to the entrance of the Reserve and a small shelter is on the left. The first 200m feature 29 grass species. We walk the wide gravel, gently undulating track on the right ridge and enjoy the pleasant open eucalypt forest, at around 105 m ASL. The plant list of 183 species will keep us busy. In early June, the understorey is very healthy after summer – autumn rains.

Those who continue will descend to Buhot Creek, so well soled shoes and a stick would be useful for the full circuit.

What to bring: There are no facilities - toilet or drinking water. There is a small table and bench undercover, so bring a hat, water, food and a chair.

Directions: From the roundabout Mt Cotton, Ney and Avalon Rds, drive along Avalon Rd 5.7 km to the signed Don and Christine Burnett Reserve and car park (lat 27.6086 long 153.1844) is on your left. You then walk back 250 m on Avalon Rd and the entrance to the Ford St Reserve is on the left. As this is not a holiday in the Redlands, there should be ample parking, or you could park with care along Avalon Rd.

Registration: If you wish to come, please email me (zefarella@icloud.com) for a map, plant and grass lists and terms used in grass ID. These are courtesy of Lynne Roberts, Redland U3A Botany in the Bush. It is known as an excellent birding site in the Redlands, and a list may be available.

September 16 – 30: Long Excursion 2018 Binya National Park and Bowra Sanctuary

Leaders: Neil Fordyce & Janet White Ph: 0400 299 991 – [Please leave a message.](#)

The long excursion for 2018 will be to Binya National Park and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Bowra Sanctuary near Cunnamulla. The trip will comprise a week at Binya and a week at Bowra.

Binya is a small national park situated on the Warrego and Cuttaburra Creek flood plains 110 km south of Cunnamulla. It is an isolated park with few facilities so requires some level of self-sufficiency. Binya is not well surveyed so QNC can make a significant contribution to the knowledge of the Park.

The AWC Bowra sanctuary is 17 km north-west of Cunnamulla and has a camping area and a few powered caravan sites which will cater for about 25 people. As well, a shearers quarters can sleep 11 people in 6 rooms.

Bowra is a similar size to Binya and is well known as a very good birding location.

Please Note: Bowra has been booked by QNC for the week so do not contact Bowra about sites.

Registration: Opens late July “Expressions of interest” may be sent to Neil.Fordyce@gmail.com with the subject line “Long Excursion 2018 interest”.

EXCURSION REPORTS

April 15: White Rock Conservation Estate



Hybanthus stellarioides (VIOLACEAE) Spade Flower

A small group of dedicated naturalists gathered on what was to become an unbelievably hot day for an April outing. Nonetheless, they were amply rewarded by some great natural history (as well as a sense of relief of finally getting back to the carpark!).

The morning started cool enough for the birds to be active. In addition, a yellow footed antechinus *Antechinus flavipes* was spotted foraging around on the lower trunk of a large Blue Gum *Eucalyptus tereticornis*. The rose robin was also spotted nearby.

As the day heated up, we hiked up onto the sandstone ridges where the shade became very thin. However, such conditions were good for the butterflies, which were hill-topping at one of the knolls we chose to rest on. Highlights included great views of the Tailed Emperor *Polyura pyrrhus* whizzing around at eye height. There were numerous Glasswings *Acraea andromacha*, and Blue-banded Blues *Psychonotis caelius*, Meadow Argus *Junonia villida*, Blue Tigers *Tirumala hamata*, Scarlet and Black Jezabels *Delias argenthona* and *D. nigrina* and Common Egfly *Hypolimnys bolina* were a selection of the 14 species recorded.

Another highlight was the reptiles, with 5 species recorded, including two of the ‘comb eared’ skinks *Ctenotus taeniopleura* and *C. arcanus*. A real highlight was great views of a Gould’s (Sand) Goanna *Varanus gouldii*, which was observed casually crossing the track in front of us before disappearing beside a small log. Despite all of us searching, it could not be found again. It was great to see this species as it is a lot less common than the lace monitor *Varanus varius*. Lace monitors tend to climb trees when disturbed but the Gould’s goanna prefers to go to ground.



Wildflowers were disappointing as the hot weather and dry week had meant that a lot of the wildflowers observed on the reccy two weeks prior had disappeared. However, the area holds a lot of plant diversity, which led to plenty of discussion. Comments were made that a trip in the spring would be ideal to identify the many peas, epacrids, boronias, and dodonaea growing in the area.

Barney Hines

May 5 – 7 (Labour Day Weekend): Pottsville Environment Park, NSW



Coastal Boobialla *Myoporum acuminatum*
Photo: Barney Hines



The kids loved finding this giant spider (Grey Huntsman *Holconia immanis*) on the spotlight walk.
Photo: Barney Hines ID: Sam Hall



Scarlet Jezebel *Delias argenthona*, which uses various mistletoe species as its host plant.
Photo: Barney Hines ID: John Moss

Mammals were a highlight of this enjoyable trip. Nightly spotlighting resulted in koala, echidna, sugar glider, mountain brush-tail and ringtail possums and flying foxes all being observed. Long-nosed bandicoots were heard scratching around, their identification verified by the lovely toy trumpet call they produce when alarmed. During the day, we enjoyed observing a camp of flying foxes along the eastern arm of Cudgera Creek. Careful observation by Melanie Venz determined that they were mostly grey-headed flying foxes but that smaller numbers of black flying foxes were also present.

Each day involved a relaxing stroll along one of the two walking track circuits within the park. Interesting aspects of these walks included the prodigious amounts of midgen (midyin) berry shrubs *Austromyrtus dulcis*, most in fruit, which were happily picked and consumed by kids and adults alike. The area had a diversity of habitats ranging from mangrove to wallum like melaleuca woodlands, emerging coastal rainforest and small pockets of blackbut forest. Other plants of interest included the sandfly bush *Zieria smithii* with its wonderfully pungent odour. This plant is apparently rich in safrole (Australian Tropical Rainforest Plants website), a compound which is the pre-cursor to the modern pesticide piperonyl butoxide as well as for the drug ecstasy. Another plant of interest was the Coastal Boobialla *Myoporum acuminatum* which was growing just above the samphire flats and whose small but beautiful flower is illustrated.

Thanks to the Tweed Shire Council for facilitating an enjoyable stay.

Barney Hines

May 13: Lloyd Bird Environmental Park, Walking with Life: Exploring our Living Catchments series

Our activity started with a group of seven people, including two children, at Lloyd Bird Environmental Reserve. With no clear tracks and being sloping land, we did not venture far into the reserve. The 20 m or so that we did explore yielded a specimen of the famous Lloyd's Olive (*Notelaea lloydii*). This species is listed as vulnerable.

Evening Brown butterflies (*Melanitis leda*) were disturbed by our walking. The presence of Barbwire Grass (*Cymbopogon refractus*) and other, non-native, grasses will have been the host plants. A number of small spiders were also noticed. Given that the ground covers were almost exclusively invasive species, and some of the shrubs were also invasive species, I am left with the question - is it this, and/or the drier weather, or some other process responsible for the dearth of insects in the reserve. Malcolm McDougall Park was similarly over-run with invasive species, and also revealed very little by way of insect biodiversity. A question remains as to whether these areas are now so degraded that they are unable to support many life-forms other than invasive species of plants. Other reserves are located nearby, all mostly on steep terrain, one was particularly impenetrable and heavily over-run with invasive species that were bringing down some remnant native trees.

Helen Schwencke

May 19: 'Koala Crossing'



Birdwatching by Sandy Creek



Meadow Argus *Junonia villida*



In the higher country

On a sunny Autumn morning, 23 field naturalists from the Queensland and Fassifern Naturalist Clubs met at the Queensland Trust for Nature (QTFN) property, "Koala Crossing" near Peak Crossing. Keith McCosh of the Fassifern Club gave us an overview of the geology and vegetation of the property and we then set off on a track that wound its way down to a little dry off-shoot of Sandy Creek

The creek is well-named as the sandstone rock of the area weathers into a sandy bed. On the rocky ridges, conglomerate rock with quartz was evident and we examined some petrified wood (possibly a prehistoric *Araucaria*) embedded in a type of silt or mudstone. At the top of the ridge we came across a very dozy Bearded Dragon hiding in the grass. It played 'dead' for some time until its tail was tweaked and it shot off and climbed

a tree. After wandering around a nearby dam, which was covered with Snowflakes (*Nymphoides indica*) but was devoid of birdlife, we headed back to the cars for morning tea.

Our next ramble was a track that took us to another branch of Sandy Creek. This area was more heavily vegetated and included some flowering Ironbarks and River She-oaks (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*). This area had more birds so we spent a bit more time here. The she-oaks are dioecious (having separate male and female plants). The male trees all wore their blush of bronze flowers and the female trees had their bright red flowers. Nearby the dry remains of a Yabby was found in the now dry sandy deposits in the stream bed.



Lunch

Lunch was back at the cars and Shirley Weatherhead of the Fassifern Club, who is a local resident, told us some of the local social history of the area. The group was also informed of some of the conservation work being done here on this former grazing property by QTFN and Keith McCosh, who is also the Environmental Officer for Scenic Rim Regional Council, told us about the radio tracking of Koalas on this property and nearby Purga Creek at Peak Crossing.

Our last walk started with car-pooling up the track to a ridge-line on the southern side of the property. Here there is a mixture of Spotted Gum (*Corymbia maculata*) and Narrow-leaved Ironbark (*Eucalyptus crebra*) with small stands of Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*) and Moreton Bay Ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*) interspersed here and there with Bat-wing Coral Tree (*Erythrina vespertilio*) and Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*). Here we saw some of the more open woodland bird species, such as Weebill, Speckled Warbler, Jacky Winter and White-throated Honeyeater. There were also both Scarlet and Black Jezebel butterflies in the higher canopy and a few Tailed Emperor butterflies rushing through, hardly giving us time to identify them. A few of the understorey plants that caught our attention were Cough Bush (*Cassinia laevis*) and one of the Native Jasmines (*Jasminum suavisissimum*).

The specie lists included: various plants including 5 grasses; 1 crustacean; 2 spiders; 23 insects including 18 butterflies and moths; 2 reptiles; 42 birds; 1 mammal (but no koalas) and 1 fungus.

Barry Jahnke. Based upon the report of Fassifern Club member, Lesley Beaton.

June 10: Little Ugly Creek area, Moggill Regional Park, Walking with Life: Exploring our Living Catchments series

With the weather looking ominous, three people gathered for this activity, only to experience the delight of the weather fining up beautifully for the duration. If we managed to walk 250 m, then that was a long way, there was so much to be seen. The Wirrabara Rd access point to Moggill Regional Park yielded a diverse range of native plants and a surprisingly large number of insects for the weather getting cooler. As yet, invasive species don't predominate in the ground covers or understorey, though there were patches of the ground covering Creeping Lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*) that were gaining a foothold and excluding the native ground covers.

Of particular note were a number of dead Mealybug Ladybird larvae (*Cryptolaemus montrouzieri*) as well as some still living on some small patches of mealy bugs. The presence of some tiny remnants of Fishbone Cassia (*Chamaecrista nomame*) plants could well have accounted for the number of Small Grass-yellow butterflies (*Eurema smilax*) that were present. This butterfly has had larger populations over the last three months of this year than in recent years. Many plant species were well-chewed, though the creatures responsible were nowhere to be seen.

Upon my return home I found a link to a blog post, Wild BNE by Christian Perrin, called Moggill Plants: a learning journey, about the vegetation of this area of the park in my mailbox. It's well worth a read: <http://wildbrisbane.blogspot.com/2018/06/moggill-plants-learning-journey.html>

Helen Schwencke

June 16: City Botanic Gardens

On a dry sunny winter day, nine Club members were treated to a very educational tour of these Heritage Gardens by Mr. Ross Muller who has been a Volunteer Guide in the City Botanic Gardens for about twenty years. Ross has a special interest and knowledge of the history of the Gardens and expressed a belief that we probably were already knowledgeable about the trees even though many of them are foreign to Australia.



Near the Araucaria Walk

Since the area was selected for the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement government garden in 1828 by Charles Fraser, Allan Cunningham and Patrick Logan, it has had a checkered history. It has been flooded on a number of occasions, as well as suffering several droughts (including the present time) and has undergone a variety of uses including sport and being part of a zoo under Ernest Walter Bick's curatorship between 1917 and 1940.



Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*)

Walter Hill was the Gardens' first and longest serving curator and we were shown many of the trees that he planted including a famous Macadamia Nut tree planted in 1858 and despite its age and competition in the rainforest area it is still producing nuts. Many potential commercial plants were trialled during the early years of the Gardens with sugar cane being the best known. Hill was well ahead of his time with his introduction and trial of many sub-tropical crops when it was considered that pineapples were not acceptable food for Europeans.

The Gardens suffered some neglect during several periods when it did not have a curator. This included 1940 to 1946 and 1983 to 2015 when it was considered to be a recreational park. Since 2015 it has come under the curatorship of Dale Arvidsson.

These are just some of the historical aspects that our guide, Ross Muller told us, as well as showing us many beautiful and interesting plants during our two and a half hour stroll which finished at a huge Banyan Tree on some of the higher land near the Queensland University of Technology.

Many thanks go to Ross for his time, knowledge and enthusiasm.

Barry Jahnke



Under a Banyan Tree

QNC CALENDAR PHOTO COMPETITION

The QNC runs a wide range of day outings and camps during the year. We would like to capture some of these moments in our annual calendar. To this end, we are asking members to submit photos from QNC outings to the QNC Calendar Photo Competition.

Entries will be accepted based on the following categories:

- Marine
- Birds
- Plants
- Fungi
- Mammals, reptile, frogs and freshwater fish
- Insects and other invertebrates
- Geology, landscapes and club activities.

Participants are invited to submit up to four photos, with a maximum of two per category. All images need to be taken on a Club outing. All photos need to be labelled with a caption with a species name (where possible and relevant) and a location. Entries need to be submitted electronically by 9th October. The file name should be descriptive and files should be JPG and no larger than 4 Mb. Entries should be emailed to photo@qnc.org.au.

Entrants agree that the Club may use submitted photos in the 2019 calendar. The photographer will be credited. Copyright of the calendar and its content will remain with the club. The editor may crop, resize or otherwise alter the photo.

Voting will be conducted by members on the night of the meeting, with voting occurring within each category. Two photos will be chosen per category.

Finally, the club would like to thank Sheryl Backhouse for her outstanding contribution in organising the last few years' editions. Thanks Sheryl.

WHAT ELSE IS ON?

Queensland Herbarium Seminars

The Herbarium hosts free public seminars at the Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens from noon until 1 PM on the second Monday of the month (March to November) at the FM Bailey conference room in the Herbarium building. There is no need to register, refer to the following website for details:

www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/seminars-events

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|----------------|--|
| 9 July 2018 | A Herbarium Library: much more than the sum of its parts
Helen Cole (Honorary Associate, Queensland Herbarium) |
| 13 August 2018 | Taxonomic clarification of the critically endangered <i>Notelaea ipsviciensis</i>
Gillian Brown and Laura Simmonds (Queensland Herbarium) |

The Hut Environmental & Community Association Inc. (THECA) Meetings

General meetings are usually held at The Hut, 47 Fleming Road, Chapel Hill, at 7:00 PM on the fourth Wednesday of each month from February to November. www.theca.asn.au

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|--------------|--|
| 25 July 2018 | General Meeting – THECA Talks: Check THECA's website for updates |
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DUE 1st JULY

Family \$40; Single \$25; Student /Junior \$15; Replacement Club Badges \$15

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