



# QNC NEWS

Newsletter of the  
QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB INC.

No. 357 July-Aug 2021

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[www.qnc.org.au](http://www.qnc.org.au)

Print Post Approved: 100003858

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## PROGRAMME JULY-AUGUST 2021

**General Meetings:** Please register at [meetings@qnc.org.au](mailto:meetings@qnc.org.au) or phone Mike on 0434 148 170

**July 19** Ben Diggles will speak on Pumicestone Passage Restore as a natural source

**August 16** Short presentations by QNC members

**Excursions:** Please register at [excursions@qnc.org.au](mailto:excursions@qnc.org.au)

**July 24** Dr Ian Lawn, Myriam Preker - King Island, Wellington Point Marine Excursion

**August 22** Allan Carr - Bribie Island Excursion

## CLUB CONTACT DETAILS

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

Dr Peter Woodall at [journal@qnc.org.au](mailto: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](mailto:treasurer@qnc.org.au)) to update your details.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Items for the News

We would love you to share your experiences in, or observations of, the natural world through the newsletter. These may be current or something you've been meaning to share for a while.

Please send your written piece with photos and photo captions to [news@qnc.org.au](mailto:news@qnc.org.au).

### Naturalists' Clubs' Newsletters

Several naturalists' clubs are sharing newsletters to encourage continued interest and knowledge sharing while social distancing is in place. These can be found at the following links:

<https://qnc.org.au/Publications.htm> and <https://mysd.com.au/fieldnats/nats-magazines-2/>

### 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](mailto: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.

### Library Catalogue

The library catalogue can be found on the QNC website at <http://www.qnc.org.au/Library/QNCLibraryCatalogue.pdf>

## Subscription Reminder

**This is a reminder that Subscriptions for 2021-22 are due on 1 July 2021. Options for payment are shown on the back page of the QNC News. Please check with the treasurer if you are unsure about the currency of your subscription.**

## Latest on COVID-19

Please see the website below for the latest information (accessed 3 July 2021)

[Covid-19 updates](#)

### COVID guidelines

- ❖ Please register for all meetings by email to [meetings@qnc.org.au](mailto:meetings@qnc.org.au) or phone Mike on 0434 148 170
- ❖ Please register for all excursions by email to [excursion@qnc.org.au](mailto:excursion@qnc.org.au) or phone Barney on 07 3720 9414
- ❖ COVID-19 social distancing, hygiene and other requirements will be implemented.
- ❖ Also, NO SUPPER will be held at the meetings, and no books or library items will be on display.
- ❖ ***Please do not attend QNC meetings or outings if you are feeling unwell or showing cold or flu-like symptoms.***

## 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 can be accessed 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).

### 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.

### COMING UP

#### Monday 19 July 2021

**Speaker:** Dr Ben Diggles

**Topic:** Pumicestone Passage

**What it was like, what happened and what can be done about it.**

The pristine and highly productive Pumicestone Passage estuary provided sustenance and cultural services for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. Following European settlement in 1823, Pumicestone Passage remained a highly productive fishery, however by the 1890's eutrophication and sedimentation from catchment clearing began to damage the oyster fishery, first signalled by loss of biogenic subtidal shellfish reefs in formerly highly productive "dredge sections".

By the late 1960's the oyster industry was in rapid decline due to emergence of QX, a disease process triggered by sedimentation and immune suppression due to chemical runoff from agriculture and forestry in adjacent river catchments. Throughout the 21st century decline of the ecological health of the passage has continued, signalled by accelerating frequencies of algal blooms and fish kill events. Recent oyster gardening and recycling initiatives for the shellfish reef restoration trial at Kakadu Beach in Pumicestone Passage have raised community awareness of the loss of these ecosystems and the many critical ecological services they once provided, uncovering a groundswell of community support to reverse the decline. However, the Moreton Bay Marine Park was established in 1993 on a shifted management baseline which does not accommodate restoration of these critical ecosystems at this time.

In the face of relentless catchment development, only by a concerted effort to cleanse runoff and permit active restoration of underwater habitats will Governments and community be able to slow or reverse the decline of this highly stressed marine ecosystem.

**Bio:** Dr Ben Diggles is a marine biologist who specialises in the study of the health of aquatic animals and their environment. He is a director of DigsFish Services Pty Ltd, a fish health consulting company established in 2003 to provide aquatic animal health services to Industries and Governments throughout Australasia. Dr Diggles has published hundreds of papers and reports over the past 30 years on issues as diverse as parasites and diseases of wild and aquacultured fish and shellfish,

national and international biosecurity frameworks, pathogen risk analyses, fish welfare, fish kill investigations and environmental standards for fishing tournaments. For more information, see [www.digsfish.com](http://www.digsfish.com)

### **Monday 16 August 2021**

This will be a club night where we will have **several short presentations by members on their own observations or topics of interest**. If you have something you would like to share at the meeting please contact Ron or Judy to give us a brief outline so we can organise the night. It's a while since we've had such a meeting and we thought we are about due another.

### **At the May meeting – Narelle Power and Damien White presented Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Gold Coast**

Odonata are 325 million years old and fossil records show some very large forms, with wing spans up to 70cm. The name Odonata derives from the Greek “odonto” from the large teeth found on the mandibles of most adults. There are two orders, damselflies and dragonflies. Zygoptera – Damselflies have the fore- and hindwings similar in shape, usually smaller, eyes apart and wings along body when at rest while in Anisoptera – Dragonflies the fore- and hindwings are different in shape, usually larger, eyes together and wings out when at rest. Damian then showed us some exceptions to this general rule.

The life cycle is hemimetabolous (incomplete metamorphosis) comprising 3 life stages. Eggs are generally laid directly into water, mud or even timber. The nymph or naiad or larvae undergo gradual metamorphosis in 9-15 stages over months to years. They are generally aquatic, but may be semi-aquatic or terrestrial.

Damian showed photos of Redtails in the typical “wheel” mating position where the male grasps the female by the back of the neck with its claspers and the female brings her tail round to the abdomen of the male for transfer of sperm into the ovipositor. Damian then showed photos of various nymphs who have their gills at the end of the abdomen. The adult usually emerges at night and pumps blood into the wings and body which hardens up after a few hours. Habitats are numerous; rainforest streams, suburban creeks and drains.

Odonata are a relatively small order; the number of species of Odonates worldwide is approx. 5,700. The City of Gold Coast boasts 89 species of the 333 in Australia in 113 genera, compared to 16 species in New Zealand. New species continue to be identified due to more photography, more databases and warming climate. However, some swamp species may have become less common. Damian went on to show a magnificent series of photos of Odonates including one of a Common Glider heavily infested with water mites. They sometimes pick them up as nymphs and it is uncertain whether they may impede flight.

Chris Burwell then showed photos of the Goomburra outing on 6th March – 19 attendees included Rod Hobson, some from Fassifern Nats and Stanthorpe Nats. The group found 7 species: Sigma Darner, Forest Needle, Black Tigertail, Southern Vicetail, Common Flatwing and 26 species of butterfly in the National Park. A vote of thanks to the speakers was given by Colleen Foelz who commented on the great level of information and beautiful photos, especially those of feeding Odonata. Colleen expressed the hope it inspires people to buy the book and look for these ubiquitous insects.

# EXCURSIONS

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

## A WORD FROM BARNEY – EXCURSIONS SECRETARY

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 in leading an excursion, **contact Barney by email [excursion@gnc.org.au](mailto:excursion@gnc.org.au) or telephone: 07 3720 9414.**

## REGISTRATION GUIDELINES DURING COVID-19

To comply with government regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club is changing the way that registrations occur for Club outings. These guidelines are listed below. Note that the Club may need to change the guidelines at short notice to comply with ongoing changes in government regulations.

Current Guidelines:

- The number of participants at Club activities may be restricted.
- **Members must register via email** to the Excursion Secretary at [excursion@gnc.org.au](mailto:excursion@gnc.org.au) preferably at least 24 hours before day outings and three days prior to camps.
- **Registration needs to include the names and contact details of all persons attending.**
- Participants will need to maintain social distancing requirements for the outing.
- ***Please do not attend QNC outings if you are feeling unwell or showing cold or flu-like symptoms.***

## UPCOMING EXCURSIONS

### **Day outing – King Island, Wellington Point Marine Excursion**

**Date and time:** Saturday 24 July 2021 at 2pm

**Leaders:** Dr Ian Lawn and Myriam Preker

**Phone:** (07) 3374 0478

**Meeting location:** under the fig trees near the Point of View Restaurant & Café

**Register:** by email to [excursion@gnc.org.au](mailto:excursion@gnc.org.au) with King Island in the subject line. Please include names and contact details in case the activity is cancelled.

**Details:** Low Tide: 0.30m at 15:34.

King Island is a conservation park and is composed of calcareous sand, derived from weathered coral debris and shell grit; it has a small stand of grey mangrove *Avicennia marina* on the eastern side of the island. It is connected to Wellington Point at low tide by a one kilometre muddy-sand causeway. The intertidal region of this causeway is very rich in marine life. It is composed of small-

scale, diverse communities of coral, seagrass, algae and soft substrate habitats. Invertebrates such as soft corals, sponges and bivalve molluscs are numerous. One study found that over 30 species of gastropods were present in this region. Sharks and rays can often be seen hunting for food in the mangrove shallows, and King Island itself is a roost for waders. We will look for the impact of the recent heavy rains on the few remaining corals.

Assemble at 14:00 under the fig trees near the “Point of View Restaurant & Café”. There are toilets and picnic shelters available nearby. The walk will commence at the base of the steps that descend from the rock wall on to the beach. The return walk is about 2 km and is suitable for all ages. It is much easier to walk on this shore than on the slippery, rocky reefs we have encountered on previous marine excursions. Wellington Point is popular, especially at weekends, so parking spaces tend to be in short supply.

What to bring: sunblock; sunhat; footwear that can be used in water; and a windbreaker if it is a windy.

### **Day outing Bribie Island – Wallum, Melaleuca, Livistonia**

**Date and time:** Sunday, 22 August 2021 at 9am

**Leader:** Allan Carr

**Phone:** 0424 322 242

**Meeting location and details:** Meet at Bribie Island Community Arts Centre, 191 Sunderland Drive BANKSIA BEACH (Around ring road to park near wood crafters site – **map below on p.7**).

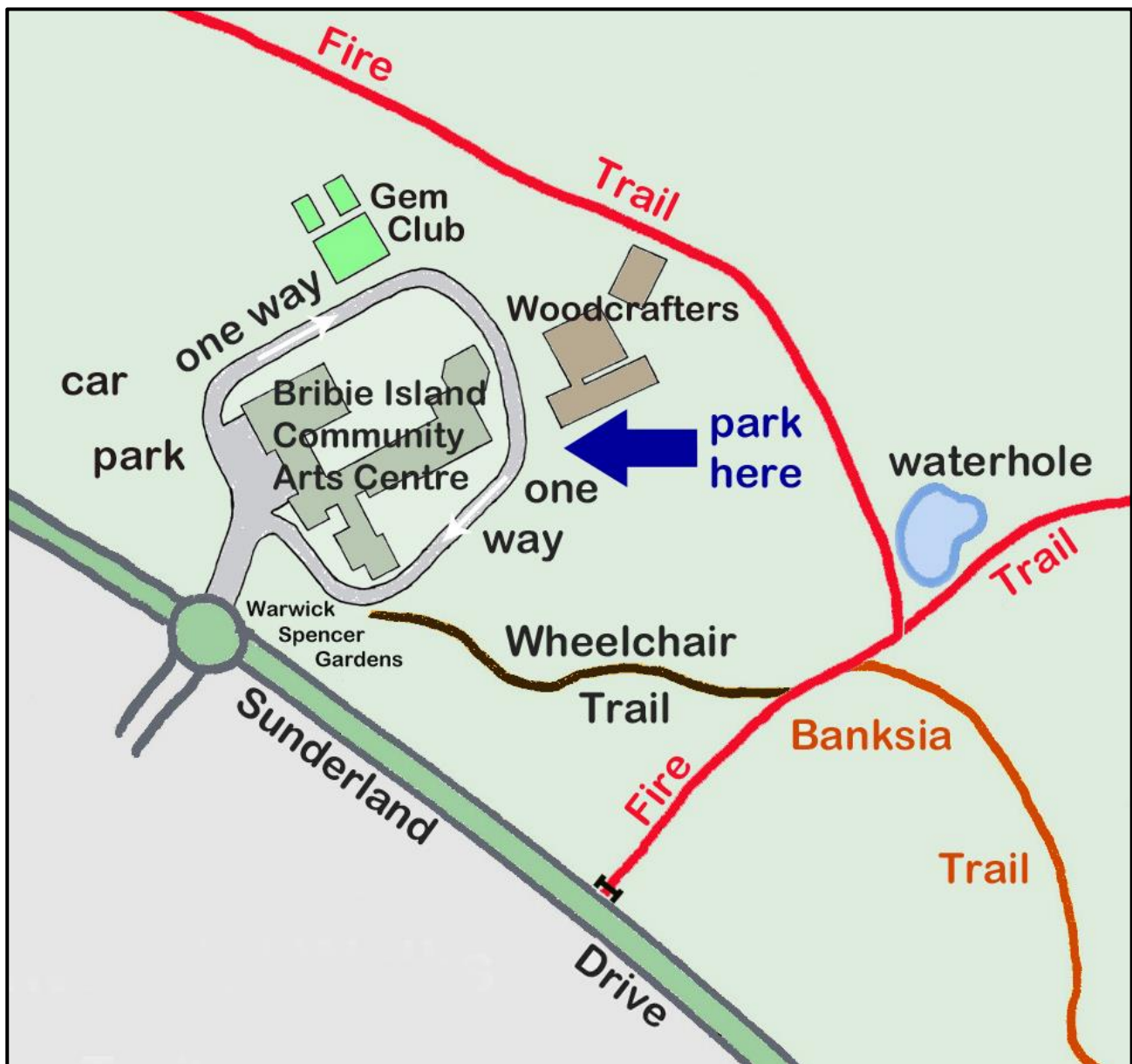
**Register:** by email to [excursion@qnc.org.au](mailto:excursion@qnc.org.au) with Bribie Island in the subject line.

**Details:** The walk will be in the Bicentennial Bushwalks – Banksia Trail, Melaleuca Circuit and Palm Grove Circuit.

For those receiving this information by email, Allan has included two relevant brochures:

Bribie Island Community Arts Centre Birds of the Bicentennial Bushwalks

Bribie Island Community Arts Centre Plants of the Bicentennial Bushwalks



## **Camp – Barakula State Forest**

**Dates:** Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September

**Leaders:** Peter and Lyn Haselgrove

**Phone:** 0409 006 063

**Enquires:** to [pely95@gmail.com](mailto:pely95@gmail.com)

**Please register by email to [Excursions@qnc.org.au](mailto:Excursions@qnc.org.au) with Barakula in the subject line and list all attendees and a contact phone number.**

We are planning a four-day, three-night camp at the old Forest Station in Barakula State Forest, located north of Chinchilla. There is some housing accommodation available as well as space to camp. We have not done a pre-outing so cannot provide much detail at this stage. Further information will be posted on the website and in the next QNC News.

Members from the Stanthorpe Field Naturalists Club will also be in attendance.

## **Camp – ‘Maybe’ via Tenterfield, NSW**

**Dates: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October**

**Leaders: Janet White, Harry Hines & Neil Fordyce (Mob. 0400 299 991).**

**Please register by email to [Excursions@qnc.org.au](mailto:Excursions@qnc.org.au) with ‘Maybe’ in the subject line and list all attendees and a contact phone number.**

“Maybe” is a 118-hectare former grazing property owned by club members Janet White and Neil Fordyce. It is 17km west of the town of Tenterfield, NSW, on the western edge of the Tenterfield plateau at an average elevation of about 900m above sea-level.

The property was partly cleared but still contains more than 40 hectares of forest. The western side of the property contains Caley’s Ironbark, *Eucalyptus caleyi*, Orange Gum, *E. prava* and Black Cypress Pine, *Callitris endlicheri*, whilst the wetter eastern side is dominated by stringybarks with scattered Forest Oak, *Allocasuarina torulosa*. In between there is a mix of stringybarks plus *E. melliodora*, *E. bridgesiana*, *E. andrewsii*, *E. blakelyi* and *E. dealbata*. (Need help identifying the stringybarks please!) The underlying geology is all granite and part of the property is dissected by a 700m long gorge on Gipsies Creek. More than 200 species of native plants have been recorded including two listed as endangered in NSW. At the time of print 112 bird species have been noted. The property hosts a healthy population of four species of macropods and the Spotted-tailed Quoll is commonly recorded on cameras. Two fauna surveys have also noted 26 species of reptiles and 10 species of frogs.

The camp site is about 200m off the Gunyah road adjacent to a woolshed which supplies the rainwater tank. The club will arrange pit toilets. The woolshed may be used for evening meetings, if needed, as long as you don’t mind the smell of sheep! A short walk from the campsite, Reedy creek flows across granite slabs and provides a pleasant spot to sit and enjoy fauna. It can get cold here and campers should come prepared for frost.

### **Directions:**

Allow approximately 4 hours travel time from the Brisbane CBD. From Brisbane travel on the Cunningham Highway to Warwick then south on New England Highway to Tenterfield. Continue 450m past the Post Office then turn right on Douglas Street. Continue on for 1.5km and turn left at the cemetery on Western Street. After 100m turn right onto Mount Mackenzie Road and travel for 7.1km to end of the bitumen then veer left to stay on this road. After 1.6km turn right on Gunyah road. “Maybe” is 4.4km down Gunyah Road on the right hand (north) side. Ignore any signs that say “Private Property” - they refer to the land, not the road. There are lots of kangaroos along this road so drive slowly. Look out for the huge *Banksia integrifolia*, there are a couple of splendid specimens at the ford 1.7km down Gunyah Road.

# EXCURSION REPORTS

## JC Trotter Memorial Park, Burbank Excursion 24 April 2021

By Susan Nelles

JC Trotter Memorial Park, Cherbon St Burbank is an 82 hectare open woodland about 20 km south east of Brisbane. A European landowner donated 28 hectares in 1958, and the Brisbane City Council has added land which forms part of the Koala Bushland, stretching to Daisy Hill. There are several easy walking tracks, picnic tables, electric BBQ and no toilets. The forest skirts along Tingalpa Creek which flows in to the Leslie Harrison Dam, managed by SEQ Water for our drinking supplies.

The catchment is 87 sq km. In 2014, the dam was drained of 50% water and dam maintenance was completed in 2018. It brings to mind the late QNC member, David Morwood, and his knowledge and love of hydrology. An interesting consequence is to see the *Melaleucas* that have a massive root base standing over a metre above the ground, and the saplings and weeds that have flourished in the 100m or so of previously submerged land. No recreational use of the dam is permitted.

We used the U3A plant list of 178 species (Lynn Roberts, John Moss) as a guide. There are 32 species of the Poaceae family of grasses, 19 of the pea flowers Fabaceae, alas too early for many flowers. We puzzled over the ID of the bloodwood-like *Angophora woodsiana*, and enjoyed the lush stands of *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii*, *Melaleuca sieberi* is a distinctive small tree, especially after fire.

Many water birds can be observed throughout the year, including black swans, pelicans, jacana, cormorants and raptors.

24 birds, most heard, not seen. List supplied by Kathy Clark

Bar-shouldered Dove (*Geopelia humeralis*) 1  
Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) 1  
Dusky Moorhen (*Gallinula tenebrosa*) 1  
Australasian Darter (*Anhinga novaehollandiae*) 1  
Little Pied Cormorant (*Microcarbo melanoleucos*) 1  
Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) 1  
Australian Pelican (*Pelecanus conspicillatus*) 1  
Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) 1  
Rainbow Bee-eater (*Merops ornatus*) 2  
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*) 1  
Little Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta pusilla*) 2  
Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*) 4  
Lewin's Honeyeater (*Meliphaga lewinii*) 1  
Yellow-faced Honeyeater (*Caligavis chrysops*) 6

Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*) 6  
 Brown Honeyeater (*Lichmera indistincta*) 1  
 White-throated Honeyeater (*Melithreptus albogularis*) 6  
 Noisy Friarbird (*Philemon corniculatus*) 16  
 Striated Pardalote (*Pardalotus striatus*) 4  
 Grey Shrikethrush (*Colluricincla harmonica*) 1  
 Rufous Whistler (*Pachycephala rufiventris*) 2 Male  
 Pied Currawong (*Strepera graculina*) 2  
 Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) 2  
 Torresian Crow (*Corvus orru*) 4

We observed two dragonflies, Blackheaded Skimmer *Crocothemis nigrifrons*, and an Emerald, probably *Hemicordulia australiae* or *H. continentalis*. They are so difficult to photograph on the wing. The only butterfly observed was a female small green banded blue, *Psychonotis caelius*. ID for insects by John Moss. We saw no macropods or reptiles. Our party of 7 retired to the covered picnic tables for more conversation. Thanks to all who attended and helped with identification.

## **Minto Crag Excursion 30 April to 2 May 2021**

**By Dick Copeman**

Whinpullen (Minto Crag) is the remnant of a rhyolite ring dyke near Mt Alford, south of Boonah on Yugarapul country. Four members spent a fine and cool May long weekend clambering over the rocky crags, guided by the property owner, Robert Allen.

Tony Bean from the herbarium was with us, so plants were a key focus. Despite the crags rising to only 330m elevation, there were many montane plant species, including the vulnerable shrub Pine-leaved Bertya, *Bertya pinnifolia*, and the near-threatened shrub, Grey Rulingia, *Rulingia salviifolia*. The Lily of the Valley orchid *Dendrobium monophyllum* and *Leucopogon neoangelicus* were in flower, as were the Australian Harebell, *Isotoma axillaris*, and the Slender Parsnip, *Trachymene procumbens*. Helidon Mahogany, *Eucalyptus helidonica*, was a common canopy species, Chain fruit *Alyxia ruscifolia* and Brown Wattle *Acacia brunioides* were common shrubs, and there were many different ferns along the bottom of the rocky cliffs, including the Forked fern, *Dicranopteris linearis var linearis* and the Ribbon fern, *Ophioglossum pendulum*.

Also at the bottom of the cliffs were fragments of indigenous stone tools that were pointed out by Rob Allen, while up on top, there were numerous scats of the reclusive Brush-tailed Rock wallaby *Petrogale penicillate*, and we were fortunate to see the animal on the last day. Around one of the dams, we found a frog, probably the Broad-palmed Rocket frog, *Litoria latopalmata*, and we also found one small skink, the Striped Snake-eyed skink, *Cryptoblepharus virgatus*. There were not many fungi but Lil identified the remnants of a bracket fungi that had been chewed by insects.

During the day, there were a moderate number of butterflies, including the Black Jezebel, Varied Eggfly, White-banded Plane and Glasswing and a Tussock moth caterpillar. After dark, we found many interesting arthropods near the campsite, including Jewel spiders, *Austracantha minax*, Dew-drop spiders *Argyrodes antipodanus*, and many others, plus some young wasps, possibly paper wasps *Polistes* sp.

## Minto Crag Excursion (continued)



Pine-leaved Bertya *Bertya pinnifolia*



Young wasps ? *Polistes* sp



Lily of the Valley orchid *Dendrobium monophyllum*



Jewel spider *Austracantha minax*

## Christmas Creek Excursion Sunday 23 May 2021

By Ron Carr

We all managed to arrive within moments of each other at 9 o'clock on the day. Doug Smith, Barney and Thuy and kids, James and Quan and child, Judy, Barbara and David Hanger and myself (Ron).

We began by meeting an approximately equal number of locals who more or less constitute the Lamington Landcare Group Inc. By the time we arrived the locals had the water boiling for tea and

coffee, and laid out a memorable collection of cakes and other delectables including home grown bananas and mandarins.

Christmas Creek drains to the west of the Lamington Plateau and we are all familiar with the subtropical rainforest that still clothes the protected areas of that rugged landscape. The particular area that we visited has enjoyed no such protections and has been exploited as cattle country for generations. With the breaking up of the old holdings and some further subdivision the country is now taken up by rural/residential uses. With the cattle gone the onrush of lantana and glycine was irresistible and has choked much of the land. A group of landowners at the end of the valley in recent years formed the Lamington Landcare Group Inc. They were successful in obtaining a grant of some \$38,000 which, not without some controversy, they expended in engaging a spraying contractor to clear the upper part of the valley of those weeds. They have had a good deal of success in motivating a number of property owners to join with them in maintaining the cleared land and revegetating the area.

The excursion was confined mainly to the cleared areas adjacent to the creek where most of the replanting has been done. On the return we followed the road. This was a shared outing to which we had been invited to assist the Landcare Group with the identification of those species now on the land. Many of these had been planted in recent years but nobody had managed to keep a good record of those plantings. Within the corridor we identified 124 species of which the majority would not have been endemic to the area however the locality has been so much changed by post settlement usage/exploitation that at this stage whether a plant is suitable for planting now is a better test than whether it once existed there. The most immediate and impressive feature of the present landscape is the monumental stand of Flooded gum *Eucalyptus grandis*. One or more colonies of bellbirds inhabit the area but as yet there is no sign of any damage and the trees are in magnificent health. These are also not endemic having only appeared in the early years after the introduction of cattle.

Our member James Campbell who came along on the excursion grew up on the original holding and remembers the area well from his youth. We were surprised to hear that a species of antechinus remains abundant in the area. The locals say they are quite commonly encountered in the engine bay of vehicles where there is an opportunity to enjoy some warmth on a cool night.

All that said, the areas we visited presented as beautiful parkland and at the end it was a pleasure to sit together finalising the last of our species identifications as the sun was getting low. Of course, as you'd expect with only an hour or so of light left Barney and James took off up the steep hill at the back of the property in search of a cave remembered by James from his childhood.

On another property that we visited was another, more famous cave. This was a cave occupied by a man known at the time only as "The Hermit". He lived in the cave from sometime during the 1920s until 1938. His name was Charles Chesworth Burgess and it is known that he lived from 9/5/1883 to 11/4/1939. There is a memorial plaque displayed at the site which, as these things sometimes do, raises more questions than it answers as it says that the memorial has been placed there by his "descendants". Presumably he had no more children after he moved to the cave during the 1920s. Although nothing is mentioned about the Great War one is left free to speculate, that this man may have had a family prior to the war, possibly went off to war and found himself afterwards unable to resume family life or indeed any communal life and so saw out his time as The Hermit living on the fringe of society, little-known but respected.

## Christmas Creek Excursion (continued)



Crab spider (*Tharrhalea evanida*)



Brown Pine (*Podocarpus elatus*) fruiting heavily

## **Mt Mellum Excursion 27 June 2021**

**By Gretchen Evans**

**Property of Ian and Chrissie McMaster**

Fifteen QNC members were welcomed to the McMaster Land for Wildlife property at around 8.30am with hot coffee and cake around a glowing fire. It is a large property of some 240 acres and includes two Nature Refuges. Ian has divided it up into 24 different management areas for which he has detailed species lists.

This diversity occurs because of the differing soil types derived from the underlying basalt or sandstone. Some parts are old growth, some parts which were cleared and have either been planted or left to regrow. There is also one section which had a light burn put through.

During the day we walked two circuits to see this diversity - before and after lunch. There were several plant experts to sort out and ID the amazing variety of trees, shrubs, vines, cycads and ferns.

In the rainforest area we saw a giant *Dysoxylum mollissimum* covered in ferns. At one point interest was generated in some trees with compound leaves. This led to a discussion on what is a leaf, importance of domatia etc and the learning of how to recognise Family characteristics eg Meliaceae, Myrtaceae. During the day we saw many huge trees such as tallowoods, blackbutts, *E. grandis*, *E. acmenoides*.

We also saw two plots of 660 eucalypts which were planted as part of a koala restoration project. Many were grown by Chrissie from seeds collected on the property.

John Moss mentioned the large number of butterfly host plants present. He also noted one mistletoe he saw from afar. Some of us were happy to find *Billardiera scandens* flowering and fruiting and also an attractive *Hibbertia scandens* in flower.

Highlights noted by the birdos were two grey goshawks, a wompoo fruit dove and an oriole at a nest.

Lil was as usual searching for fungi and found about 14 specimens. These were *Russula*, *Asaroe rubra* (stinkhorn), *Microporus xanthopus*, *Lycoperdon* (puffball), *Schizophyllum commune*, 4 *Agarics* sp, *Ramaria* (corals in colours, yellow, peach, pink), a greenish Agaric – sent off to iNaturalist for possible ID.

Being a Land for Wildlife property means that Ian and Chrissie have had help from contractors weeding but I am sure we were all impressed by how much they have achieved in just over 11 years since buying the property. I am sure everyone went home feeling enriched after having such a good excursion in glorious weather. Thanks to both of them for allowing us access to this beautiful place.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### SPRING NATIVE FLOWER SHOW & PLANTS MARKET

**The Auditorium & Lawns Brisbane Botanic Gardens – Mt Coot-tha September 3, 4 & 5, 2021**

**By James Hansen**

In the past few years, QNC has had a presence at these sales selling books, handing out membership application forms and generally answering questions from the public. The QNC effort has been very worthwhile, thanks to the volunteers involved. However, due to COVID requirements there will be many difficulties with crowd numbers and processing sales this year outside the main building. We extend thanks to all volunteers who have assisted in the past and all who would have come forward this year. However, we regrettably advise that QNC will not be present there this year but we hope to resume this activity in 2022.

### **Black-throated Finch**

**By Sally Johnsen (Past President)**

There are two sub-species of Black-throated Finch in Queensland, the northern sub-species *Poephila cincta atropygialis* which is black from the lower back to the tip of its tail, and the endangered southern sub-species, *Poephila cincta cincta* which has a black tail and a white patch on its rump.

During a road trip in northern Queensland in May, Terry and I camped at the known bird-watching location, Cumberland Dam, which is 24 km west of Georgetown. The grasses, shrubs and trees around the small dam attract a wide range of birds, and as is my habit, I try and record observations with the camera to later confirm species we had seen.

In the late afternoon a pair of Finch of unknown species flew through the trees and landed towards the top of a denuded tree near the waters edge. They stayed at their perch for less than 30 seconds before taking to the wing once again. On reviewing the photos we were able to identify the finch as the Black-throated Finch, northern sub-species.

We were very happy as this was another “lifer” for us, and the 5<sup>th</sup> new finch for us during this trip. We had earlier seen the Long-tailed Finch and Pictorella Manniken at Lake Moondarra via Mt Isa, and the Masked Finch and Painted Finch at O’Shannessy’s River crossing on the Riversleigh Road south of Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) NP). A chance sighting of the Gouldian Finch, known to being seen at Cumberland Dam from time to time, would have been delightful, however that experience awaits us on a future trip.



Black-throated finch by Sally

### **Ian Hutton, Lord Howe Island**

**By Greg Neill**

QNC members may be interested to read this ABC article about Ian Hutton, who expertly guided QNC members when we visited the Island in 2017.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-02/lord-howe-island-researcher-ian-hutton-honoured/100254712>

During the past 40 years, Ian Hutton has developed an expansive knowledge of the small island's natural history and has also contributed to many scientific projects, including working closely with the Southern Cross University (SCU). Mr Hutton said he had contributed to about 50 scientific projects that have been published in scientific journals. SCU has now recognised his dedication, naming him an Honorary Doctor in Natural and Physical Sciences, an award he recently received at the Coffs Harbour Campus on New South Wales Mid North Coast.

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