

WILDLIFE DIARY

May 2010



Great Finds

Did You Know?

Bobuck, Short-eared possum, *Trichosurus caninus*, (grey form) found at Mt Cotton. (photographs taken)

Stoney Creek Frog, *Litoria wilcoxi* found at Mt Cotton (photographs taken). Renamed from *Litoria Lesueuri* in 2004. <http://frogs.org.au/frogs/species/Litoria/wilcoxi>

Squirrel glider, *Petaurus norfolcensis*, visits Wellington Point resident.

POPULATION MATTERS

Arguments for a larger Australian population are uniformly based on a belief that it will increase the growth of the economy. Whatever the merits of the argument (and there are few), the population boosters never ask the most fundamental question: Will a higher rate of economic growth actually make us any happier? Why do we equate national progress with economic growth when we know that continued expansion of our levels of consumption are putting ever-greater pressures on the natural environment? It's time to get over our growth fetish.

Clive Hamilton, Executive Director, [The Australia Institute](http://www.population.org.au), 2003
www.population.org.au

Stormwater and roads

It is shown greater urban densities worsen the impact of stormwater run-off and increase the quantity of water as buildings, paving and concrete cover pervious areas and the water cannot then be slowed in its passage and infiltrate the soil. Instead efficient hydraulics force it into channels, where the volumes rapidly increase.

It has been found that if the surrounding catchment was covered by more than 20% impermeable surfaces there was a significant reduction in stream biota and health.

Runoff from street surfaces is also generally highly contaminated, and, based upon complete cleansing of street surfaces by a moderate to heavy storm, of one hour duration, stormwater runoff would contribute considerably more pollution load than would the same city's raw sewerage during the same period of time.



A number of **butterflies** are still present. **Common Crow**, *Euploea core*, **Meadow argus**, *Junonia villida calybe* and **Evening Brown**, *Melanitis*

leda, are still very common at the moment.

Quolls force-fed toads in survival fight

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/14/2871971.htm>

Roosting Aussie Bees

<http://www.aussiebee.com.au/video-blue-banded-bees-3.html>

Did you know recent studies show evidence of strongly reduced densities of many species of woodland and open habitat in broad zones adjacent to busy roads? The density reduction is related to a reduced habitat quality, and traffic noise is probably the most critical factor.

Did you know road ecology uses the science of ecology and landscape ecology to explore, understand, and address the interactions of roads and vehicles with their surrounding environment" (Forman et al. 2003)? Some of these interactions include: Road-kill contributing to the local decline of populations; Increase of smaller forest patches and forest edge; Disturbance, bright headlights and noise causing wildlife to avoid roads, creating smaller habitat patches; Wildlife movement, daily/seasonal, restricted by the road acting as a barrier; Restriction of movement leading to the prevention of gene flow and reduction of genetic variability; Increasing susceptibility to disease parasites and other environmental threats. Some native plants are unable to disperse their seeds across the width of a road, creating limited gene flow; **Nearby waterways become polluted with heavy metals and hydrocarbons from petrol and diesel emissions and oil leakages, causing severe degradation of the surrounding environment.**

Most researchers agree that noise can affect an animal's physiology and behavior, and if it becomes a chronic stress, noise can be injurious to an animal's energy budget, reproductive success and long-term survival.



Great Walks

The author visited [Wellington Ponds](#) a site highlighted by Redland City Council for a bridge. While the bridge may not be common knowledge it should be made well and truly known as it will destroy this peaceful habitat

for water and forest birds, compromise greenspace values and ruin local resident's amenity. Perhaps take a walk along these ponds along Lorikeet Drive Thornlands before it's ruined.

WWW

Save Wellington Ponds

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0O6Es9VwbA>

Greenspace submission

<http://www.sbaltais.com/campaign/files/greenspace.pdf>

Enviro News

<http://econews.org.au/>

Mary Street Birkdale

<http://www.savemaryst.com/>

Nature Deficit Disorder

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/allinthemind/stories/2010/2872548.htm>

Safe wildlife crossings are needed

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qGD7DE1hZk>

Black Bobucks

Another large possum still found in the Redlands is the [Short-eared Brushtail \(bobuck\)](#), *Trichosurus caninus*; which includes the grey and jet black form. The jet black bobuck is of particular interest because not many are sighted.

The 1983 Brisbane Wildlife Survey conducted by the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland and edited by Wally Davis provides a useful historical record about the bobucks of this region. This survey stated that the black bobucks were common in the coastal scrub of south east Queensland, which suggested they were a scrub possum as referred to as such by [Tom Petrie](#) (1831-1910, explorer, grazier and friend of Aborigines). Petrie provided details of how indigenous people prized the bobuck's fur and caught them by pulling them out by hand from holes in the ground or hollows. Davis also highlighted how a dairy farmer stated he had five black bobucks living in the roof of his house at Mt Cotton in rainforest country. Much of this rainforest near Venmans Reserve was cleared in 1978 for a quarry.

Since then, 1983 we are not aware of any effort to directly protect this unique species or undertake any study of any substance. In 2004 WPSQ Bayside Branch decided to see if this species was still surviving.

We are happy to report that since 2004 we have made numerous sightings. The following confirmed sightings with photographs taken other sightings exist.

- **Feb 2004** four (4) black bobucks sighted at West Mt Cotton.
- **May 2004** – more sighted at West Mt Cotton and possibly Capalaba
- **May 2007** - unfortunately one (1) found dead on Cleveland – Redland Bay Road at intersection of Eprapah Creek. However, a great find though not a great way to find out they are in this area. There is good chance bobucks can be found along the Eprapah and Tingalpa Creek riparian corridors.

We have readily seen bobucks along Tingalpa Creek at West Mount Cotton when fruiting trees are about. They are similar to the common brushtail possum but generally more robust. The form seen in the Redlands varies between a dark chocolate / black colour to a steely silver colour but both have short rounded ears. While arboreal it does spend considerable time on the ground feeding on leaves, fruit, buds, bark and fungi. Once common in the Redlands the loss of habitat has led to its decline.

We can certainly confirm that they seem just as comfortable on the ground as they are in the trees.

It should be noted that in our endeavors to find the black bobuck we have also come across some other great finds. These include.

- [Stoney Creek Frog](#), *Litoria wilcoxi*
- [Barred River frog](#), *Mixophyes fasciolatus*
- [Tusked frog](#), *Adelotus brevis*
- **Ornate sunfish**, *Rhadinocentrus ornatus*

If you have sighted a bobuck please let us know, we would be very keen to determine their range.

We believe this species is unique and it maybe the Redlands supports one of the few remaining known populations and is therefore deserving of special attention and protection.

Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. Margaret Mead.



Published by
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May 2010