

WILDLIFE DIARY

February 2012



Great Finds

Did You Know?

White-bellied Sea-Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucogaster* sighted over Leslie Harrison Dam.

The beautiful **Ornate Rainbowfish**, *Rhadinocentrus ornatus* found in Tingalpa Creek.

POPULATION MATTERS

Jane Goodall - Overpopulation in the Developing World
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6JLvlxdbjQ>

White-throated Needletails

If you look above and just before approaching storms you will likely see in large numbers the **White-throated, Needletails**, *Hirundapus caudacutus*. However, even though they are a large bird (22cm) unless you are looking skywards you will miss them. They are non-breeding migrants in Australia. Breeding takes place in northern Asia. The eggs are laid on a platform- sticks placed in a hollow or similar crevice high in a tall conifer.

Usually only seen on the wing the White-throated Needletails were once thought never to land while in Australia. It has now been observed that birds will roost in trees, and radio-tracking has since confirmed that this is a regular activity.

The White-throated Needletail feeds on flying insects, such as termites, ants, beetles and flies. They catch the insects in flight in their wide gaping beaks. Birds usually feed in rising thermal currents associated with storm fronts and bushfires and they are commonly seen moving with wind fronts. While feeding, the White-throated Needletail protects its eyes with a special membrane and a small ridge of feathers. The birds also drink while in flight.

Source: <http://birdsinbackyards.net/species/Hirundapus-caudacutus>

Macadamia integrifolia

Macadamia integrifolia is listed as Vulnerable under the QLD *Nature Conservation Act* and Federal *EPBC Act*. Macadamia belong to the Proteaceae, an ancient angiosperm family whose initial differentiation from ancestral forms occurred in the southeast of Australia 90-100 million years ago. There are only a few *M.integrifolia* (> 20) left in the Redlands, many of them sited on the Super Quarry site. *Macadamia integrifolia* (Queensland nut or Macadamia nut) is a long-lived perennial mid-storey evergreen subtropical rainforest tree to 20m tall, with greyish branchlets dotted with raised lenticels. Unless measures are taken to protect them from the impacts of the quarry and climate change we may lose them forever.

Did you know refugial habitats, such as the rainforest in Erapah Creek Corridor, are areas of high biodiversity conservation value even though they may be small in size and otherwise not flagged by current ecosystem mapping techniques? Of note eighteen species of land snails belonging to 9 families of land snails were recorded during a survey. Four snail species were of the environmentally sensitive family Charopidae. When it came to spiders the total spider diversity recorded across three studied reserves consisted of 119 species belonging to 100 genera and 36 families. Of the 119 species taken, only 51 are known and named whereas 41 are clearly new species. Likewise a diverse fauna of beetles comprising 17 species of Carabidae, 10 species of Tenebrionidae and 13 species of Scarabaeinae (dung beetles) were recorded during a survey. Interesting to note by far the greatest diversity seemed to be confined to the wetter Erapah Creek corridor. The challenge is protecting these often tiny hotspots of biodiversity in an otherwise dry, fire-prone landscape.



and Creek Road, Birkdale Wellington Point.

Great Walks

With all this rain it's a good time to go frogging. Try the Glider Reserve at Alexandra Hills, the reserves along Chelsea Road, Ransome, German Church Road, Mt Cotton, Venman's National Park and low areas around

WWW

Super Quarry - it's back again
<http://www.superquarry.org.au/>

Coal Seam Gas
<http://tinyurl.com/8x5fqeg>

Frogs
<http://frogsaustralia.net.au/>

Seagrass Watch blog
<http://seagrassmb.wordpress.com>

Frogs

There are about 36 species of frogs listed as occurring in the Brisbane and Bayside Region. With recent rains many of these frogs have been active taking advantage of the damp conditions. Though once common the **Green tree frog**, *Litoria caerulea* seems to have vanished from many of its former haunts. It's readily identified by its dark olive to bright green back, which can change over a period of an hour. The sides often have white spots as does the back. There is usually a white streak or a number of white spots that run from the corner of the mouth to the base of the arm. The belly is white and granular. There is a skin fold that runs from the eye to the arm. The skin on the back is smooth and the iris of the eye is golden. The finger and toe pads are large. The fingers are one-third webbed and the toes are three-quarters webbed.

What appears as its smaller cousin the **Eastern Dwarf Tree Frog**, *Litoria fallax* is often found around suburban gardens so small it's overlooked but its presence is given away by its call, a high pitched "wr-e-e-ek, wr-e-e-ek, wr-e-e-ek" repeated many times. This frog is all green with a white stripe that runs from underneath the eye to the base of the arm and it's no more than 30mm long.

Another small frog (45mm) **Dainty Tree Frog**, *Litoria gracilentia* is also recognised by its call a long "waaa" or "weee". This frog is bright leaf green on its back. It has a faint yellowish-green stripe running from the nostril, over the eye and tympanum (tight membrane covering the entrance to the ear). The iris is golden or red. The belly is cream to yellow and granular. The finger and toe pads are large.

An even smaller frog with a big voice is the **Beeping froglet**, *Crinia parinsignifera*. Only 20mm in size it makes a drawn out low 'squelching' sound - "eeeeeeeeek" - repeated every few seconds. Though its colour and body patterns are varied it is generally found sheltering under logs and leaf litter in woodlands around the edges of dams and swamps. Its equally small cousin the **Clicking Froglet**, *Crinia signifera* is 30mm in size and it too makes a loud call for its size making a rapid repeated "crick...crick...crick...crick". One notable feature of this frog is that its belly is granular and blotched black and white. This frog is found in almost all habitats including wet sclerophyll forests, grasslands, disturbed areas and sometimes suburban ponds. It is always associated with water.

Great Barred Frog, *Mixophyes fasciolatus* is a 80mm frog found in the remnant rainforest regions of the Bayside area. Its call is very distinctive, a deep harsh "wark". It's a beautifully patterned frog. Its arms and legs have dark bars which widen under the legs to form a triangular pattern and the sides of its body have dark spots and blotches, and the skin on the back is finely granular. The iris is dark brown. The belly is smooth and white. The toes are three-quarters webbed. Sometime found with the Great Barred frog is the **Tusked frog**, *Adelotus brevis*. The Males have very large heads and large 'tusks' (tooth-like projections from the lower jaw). The belly of the male is black with white spots, while the female has a marbled black and white belly. Its call is quiet but distinctive, a slow "cluck" repeated several times a minute. Both these frogs are under threat from habitat destruction and modification.

Another rare frog is the **Tinkling froglet**, *Crinia tinnula*. This 30mm frog is only found in acid paperbark swamps in the 'wallum' country. Its call is a short high-pitched ring "tching...tching" like the tinkling of a bell. This frog often has a line of white spots down the middle of the throat. Its belly is granular and usually white or light brown with a few dark flecks. The snout of this frog projects beyond the lower jaw, which can be clearly seen when the frog is viewed in profile. The fingers and toes have no webbing.

Ornate Burrowing Frog, *Limnodynastes ornatus* is an interesting frog but unfortunately mistaken for a Cane toad. It can be found in a wide range of colours and markings. It can vary from dark brown above to pale grey with dark irregular markings. The frog grows to about 45mm and often has a butterfly or U-shaped light patch on the back behind the eyes. It makes a very short, rapidly repeated "unk...unk...unk" the breeding males calling while floating in the water. This frog lives in a wide range of habitats from the wet sclerophyll forests of the coasts to the dry woodlands.

Source: <http://frogsaustralia.net.au/>

Science at the Grand View Hotel

Celebrating World Wetlands Week – 11th February 2012 (9am – 12pm)

For more details goto: <http://wildlifebayside.wordpress.com/2012/01/22/science-at-the-grand-view-hotel/>

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.



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